HISTORY
OF THE
FARA'IDI MOVEMENT
IN BENGAL

(1818-1906)

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IN MEMORY

OF

My great grandfather

Mawlānā ʻAbd al-Ḥakīm

whose

Tradition of scholarship

has been a major source

of

my inspiration

FOREWORD

Nineteenth century produced widespread reform movements in the Muslim world. All of them shaped on religious bias and claimed to purify the current notions gathered round Islam and win back pristine purity. This sudden realization or re-awakening to the original pure faith must be linked up with a reaction against the lowest ebb of decadence that the Muslim world was then plunged in. Hemmed in by the European Powers and reduced either to political servility as in India or to politico-economic strain as in Western Asia and North Africa, the Muslims found themselves in a deplorable plight which needed immediate cure. Why the first reaction was coloured by religious reform, yet remains to be answered. Is this tendency peculiar to the followers of Islam? Meanwhile the studies so far made have so much over-emphasized the part played by the so-called *Wahhābī* movement of Arabia that all other reform movements are treated as its off-shoots. This confusion leaves little room for analyzing the local and historical currents that impaired the movements in different areas. It is time that the underlying forces should be examined so as to place these movements in the proper perspective of socio-cultural developments. After all, man being human, the guiding factor must be common, and inducement to these common ideas must be sought in particular conditions.

In order to answer part of this question, I suggested to my former pupil Mr. (now Dr.) Muinuddin Ahmad Khan to take up the theme of the present book for his doctoral thesis. He has been able to put forward a new point with reference to the *Farā'iḍī* movement in Bengal in the hope that similar treatment of themes akin to it may produce a better picture of the reform movements in particular and of the potentiality of Islam in general.

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July 16, 1964

PREFACE

The present work is an attempt to study a significant phase of the nineteenth century Islamic revivalism as it affected Bengal. Islamic revivalism in this century was a worldwide phenomenon, but it had different colours in different countries. In the sub-continent of India and Pakistan, Shāh Walī Allāh was the dominating influence as far as north India was concerned. The subsequent growth of his religious teachings spread out in Bengal, but here the founder of the *Farā'iḍī* movement, Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh, was directly inspired by Arab puritanism. His movement is inseparably linked up with the socio-economic life of the Muslims of Bengal who formed the large majority of the rural populace in this riverine province. This puritan movement had a double aspect: to purge the Muslim peasantry of their age long un-Islāmic beliefs and practices, and at the same time to defend their reformed religion against the vested interests of the farm and plantation landlords. The first is the religious aspect which has to be understood in the general background of religious revivalism, while the second is the socio-economic phenomenon as it affected the life of the rural Muslim populace. The spread of the *Farā'iḍī* movement along the riverine tracts of lower Bengal from its centre in the Faridpur district clearly brings into view the local geographical factors that underlay its general popularity among the peasant classes. This rural pattern of the *Farā'iḍī* movement is in clear contrast with the urbanism of the north Indian religious revivalism.

In the following pages, after a discussion of the original sources on which the main thesis is based, an attempt is made to give first a wider background, in which each aspect is properly defined and characterised. Then follow full details about the *Farā'iḍī* leaders, their religious doctrines, the social organisation and the geographical pattern of the spread of the movement. In one chapter the *Farā'iḍī* doctrines are contrasted with a later-day

influence and opposition from other religious beliefs. Throughout, the attempt is made to study intensively the *Farā'iḍī* movement and place it in the wider context of the Islamic revivalism of the nineteenth century in general, and link it with the life of the Muslims of Bengal in particular.

Originally, it was a thesis submitted to the University of Dacca on 25 January 1960 and approved for the degree of Ph. D. in 1961. I am deeply thankful to the examiners, Dr. I. H. Qureshi, Dr. Mahmud Husain, and Dr. A. R. Mallick for their very kind words about this humble study. I should like to express my gratitude to my teacher and guide Dr. Ahmad Hasan Dani, but for whose constant help and encouragement the present work might not have materialised. I also owe a debt of gratitude to my old teacher Shamshul 'Ulama Mawlana Wilayat Husain as well as to Dr. A. Halim and Mr. S. M. Ikram for generous encouragement and constructive suggestion extended to me while this work was in the process of preparation. I should also like to acknowledge with thanks and appreciation the invaluable help rendered to me by Mawlawi Sirajul Haq of Comilla in transcribing Arabic, Persian and Urdu passages, and by Dr. Mushtaqur Rahman of the University of Karachi and Mirza Mahmud Baig of the Department of Archæology, Karachi, in drawing up the map.

I am deeply thankful to the Asiatic Society of Pakistan, Dacca, for sponsoring the present study and for extending a research scholarship to me, and to the Pakistan Historical Society, Karachi, for undertaking its publication.

Finally, it is a pleasant duty to acknowledge my indebtedness to Dr. Abdul Karim of the University of Dacca, but for whose deep interest and thorough criticism this work might not have attained the present standard.

UNIVERSITY OF KARACHI : M. A. KHAN
The 20th October, 1964.

NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

(i) For Arabic, Urdu and Persian :

ا	= a	ص	= ṣ
ب	= b	ض	= ḍ
پ	= p	ط	= ṭ
ت	= t	ظ	= ẓ
ٹ	= t	ع	= ʻ
ث	= th	غ	= gh
ج	= j	ف	= f
چ	= ch	ق	= q
ح	= ḥ	ک	= k
خ	= kh	گ	= g
د	= d	ل	= l
ذ	= dh	م	= m
ر	= r	ن	= n
ڑ	= rh	ں	= n
ز	= z	و	= w
ژ	= zh	ه	= h
س	= s	ء	= ’
ش	= sh	ی	= y

Vowels Diphthongs, etc.

	Arabic	*Urdu & Persian*
Short vowels	a, i, u	a, i, u
Long vowels	ā, ī, ū	ā, ī, ū, e, o
ى (alif maqṣūrah)	ā	ā
Long vovels with tashdīd	iyah, uwah	iyah, uwah
Dipthongs	aw, ay	aw, ay
: (tā marbūṭah)	ah	at

NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION

(ii) For Bengali *:*

অ = a	ঢ = dh
আ = ā	ণ = n
ই = i	ত = t
ঈ = ī	থ = th
উ = u	দ = d
ঊ = ū	ধ = dh
ঋ = ri	ন = n
এ = e	প = p
ঐ = ai	ফ = ph
ও = o	ব = b
ঔ = au	ভ = bh
ক = k	ম = m
খ = kh	য = y
গ = g	র = r
ঘ = gh	ল = l
ঙ = n	ব = v
চ = ch	শ = s
ছ = chh	ষ = <u>sh</u>
জ = j	স = s
ঝ = jh	হ = h
ঞ = n	ড় = r
ট = ṭ	য় = y
ঠ = th	ং = m
ড = d	ঃ = h
	ঁ = n

ABBREVIATIONS

H. Beveridge :	*District of Bakargonj (The District of Bakargonj, its History and Statistics,* London, 1876).
James Taylor :	*Topography (A Sketch of the Topography and Statistics of Dacca,* Calcutta, 1840).
James Wise :	*Eastern Bengal (Notes on the Races, Castes and Traders of Eastern Bengal,* London, 1884).
J. A. S. B.	*Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal,* Calcutta.
J. A. S. P.	*Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan,* Dacca.
J. E. Gastrell :	*Jessore, Fureedpore and Backergunge (Geographical and Statistical Report of the Districts of Jessore, Fureedpore and Backergunge,* Calcutta, 1868).
J. P. H. S.	*Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society,* Karachi.
Mallick :	*British Policy* (Dr. Azizur Rahman Mallick : *British Policy and the Muslims in Bengal 1757-1856 : a study of the development of the Muslims in Bengal with special reference to their education,* Dacca, 1961.)
Trial of Dudu Miyan :	*(Translation of the Proceedings held in two cases tried in 1847 before the Session Judge of Dacca in which Doodoo Meea and his Followers belonging to the sect of Hadjees or Ferazees were charged with Wounding, Plunder, Arson &c.,* Calcutta, 1840).

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PART I

INTRODUCTORY

CHAPTER I

SOURCES

This study on the growth and development of the *Farā'iḍī* movement covers roughly the period from A.D. 1818 to 1906, *i.e.*, from the date of inception of the movement down to the death of the last head of the *Farā'iḍīs*, Khān Bahādur Sa'īd al-Dīn Aḥmad, the father of the present head, Abā Khālid Rashīd al-Din Aḥmad *alias* Bādshāh Miyān[1]. Other religious reform movements, namely *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah* and its different later factions[2], have been discussed only in so far as it was necessary to bring out the background and perspective of the *Farā'iḍī* movement. In collecting data for this study, the necessity of going back to the original sources was constantly kept in mind ; even so, the original sources were not accepted without critical scrutiny.

The social and religious conditions of the Muslims in Bengal during the nineteenth century have so far been left in obscurity. A number of socio-economic upheavals, often under the patronage of religious reform movements including the peasant agitation led by the *Farā'iḍī* leader Dudu Miyān, created a good deal of commotion in the rural society of Bengal from A.D. 1830 to 1870, which repeatedly drew the attention of the government[3]. A few scholars, such as James Wise, W.W. Hunter and Sayyid Amīr 'Alī, also took considerable interest in the socio-religious aspects of the Muslim society of Bengal, especially during the later half of the

1 It is regretted that Bādshāh Miyān died on the 13th December, 1959, when this study was completed. He is now succeeded by his eldest son Muḥsin al-Dīn Aḥmad *alias* Dudu Miyān.

2 See *infra.*, chapter II, section A.

3 W.W. Hunter's ***Our Indian Musalmans, are they bound in conscience to rebel against the Queen ?*** (London, A.D. 1871), is an assessment of the political implications of this commotion of the Muslim society for which he was commissioned by the government.

nineteenth century. Wise made an outline of different religious and professional groups of Muslims including those who attempted to introduce religious reforms[1]. Hunter made an attempt to study the political implications of the religious reform movements[2], and Amīr 'Alī tried to ascertain the position of the rapidly disappearing Muslim upper class[3]. Two modern studies, completed in recent years, have devoted considerable space to the nineteenth century Muslim socio-religious movements in Bengal though their main concern lies with different subjects. One is Dr. A.R. Mallick's study of the modern educational development of the Muslims of Bengal and Bihar[4] and the other Dr. Muhammad Abdul Bari's study of the *Wahhābī* doctrines[5]. Besides, a few articles have also been published by different authors about the *Farā'iḍī* and other socio-religious movements. In these studies, the *Farā'iḍī* movement did not receive as much attention as it deserves in its socio-religious as well as in its socio-economic aspects.

Important sources which are utilised here fall under the following heads :-

A. *Farā'iḍī* sources.

B. Contemporary sources throwing light on the *Farā'iḍī* movement.

C. Sources throwing light on the contemporary socio-religious conditions of the Muslims of Bengal.

1. See James Wise : *Notes on the Races, Castes and Trades of Eastern Bengal*, London, A.D. 1884 (printed a few copies for the private use of the Government).

2 See foot note No. 3 in page I.

3 See Syed Ameer Ali : "A Cry for the Indian Mahomedans" *Nineteenth Century*, New York, vol. xii, A.D. 1882, p. 183f.

4 Dr. A. R. Mallick : *British Policy and the Muslims in Bengal, 1757-1856, a study of the Development of ihe Muslims in Bengal with special references to their education*, Dacca, 1961.

5 Dr. Muhammad Abdul Bari : *A Comprative Study of the Early Wahābī Doctrines and Contemporary Reform Movements in Indian Islām* (unpublished Ph. D. thesis, Queen's College, Oxford University, 1953).

D. Government records.

A. Farā'iḍi Sources

We have recovered a variety of *Farā'iḍī* sources from different parts of East Pakistan, such as inscription, document, *fatwā,* (*i.e.*, legal decision), and *puthi* (*i.e.*, folk literature), which, put together, give us a fair idea of the general direction of the movement. They are described below :

(i) Tomb inscription of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh, the founder of the *Farā'iḍī* movement. The existence of this inscription was not known to the scholars before 1957, when it was recovered by the present writer from the descendants of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh. It was then critically examined, edited and published in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan[1].

It consists of ten lines of commentary on the life and character of Ḥāji Sharī'at Allāh in Arabic language, which enabled us for the first time to fix decisively the chronology of his life and to make a number of important corrections of the views advanced by earlier writers including in the *Encyclopaedia of Islām.* It was originally fixed in the surrounding wall of the Ḥājī's grave. But when the site of his grave began to be washed away by the river Arialkhān (Padma), not long after his death, the inscription was collected by Dudu Miyān (the Ḥajī's son) and preserved at his residence. In 1957, at the request of the present writer, the inscription was presented to the Asiatic Society of Pakistan (Dacca) as a gift by Mawlawī Abā Khālid Rashīd al-Dīn Aḥmad *alias* Bādshāh Miyan, the grandson of Dudu Miyān and the present head of the *Farā'iḍīs,* which he inherited from his father Khān Bahādur Sa'īd al-Dīn Aḥmad, on Badshāh Miyān's election to the headship in A.D. 1906.

It has, however, been brought to our notice that some visitors to the Dacca Museum where the inscription is preserved, questioned

1 See *J.A.S.P.*, vol. iii, 1958, pp. 187-98.

its genuineness on the ground that the *Farā'iḍīs* opposed building mausoleum and even to raising the ground on the grave; and that the stone-inscription may have been made long after the death of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh. In addition to our treatment of the inscription referred to above, it may, therefore, be pointed out that in the first place, being a tomb inscription it must have been made after the death of the Ḥājī, and on the basis of textual evidence we observed in our article that it was prepared long after the death of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh. Secondly, we have accepted the statement of Bādshāh Miyān that it was made by Dudu Miyān, the son of the Ḥājī, because it is more or less immaterial for us to dispute as to whether it was made by Dudu Miyān or by one of his sons. For, the date of the Ḥājī's death as supplied by the inscription (on the basis of which we have drawn all our conclusions therefrom) is supported by evidences from contemporary writings, especially that of James Taylor. Taylor signed the preface of his book *A Sketch of the Topography and Statistics of Dacca*, on the 30th March, 1839, and says that during the ten years from A.D. 1828, the *Farā'iḍī* movement made rapid progress. He further adds that while he was writing this, Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh was put under the ban of the Police[1]. The inscription gives the date of the Ḥājī's death as the 10th Dhī'l-Qa'dah, A.H. 1255/16th January, 1840[2]. There is, therefore, nothing unusual in it. Even if it was forged by the descendants of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh, we have no reason not to accept it, for the son and grandsons of the Ḥājī are more reliable on this matter than any other person. Thirdly, it is true that the *Farā'iḍīs* oppose building mausoleum or raising ground on the grave. But they do not object to erecting surrounding walls on the grave as is seen in the case of Dudu Miyān's grave at the Bansal Road, Dacca[3] and in that of Munīr al-Dīn Khalīfah, the earliest and most prominent *Farā'iḍī* leader of

1 Cf. James Taylor : *A Sketch of the Topography and Statistics of Dacca*, Calcutta, A.D. 1840, p. 250.

2 See *J.A.S.P.*, vol. iii, 1958, p. 189.

3 See *infra.*, Chapter iv, p. 46.

Chandpur in Tippera district[1]. These graves have boundary walls though the graves themselves are flat.

(ii) A handwritten document, composed on a stamp paper and signed by Dudu Miyān on the 22nd Paus, B.S. 1255/ 4th January, 1849, giving power of legal attorney to Munshī Faiḍ al-Dīn Mukhtār, has been recovered recently by the present writer, from the descendants of Dudu Miyān. Being a legal document, it was registered in the law court on the 15th January, 1849. It is written in Bengali language and consists of over 56 lines. It is carefully examined and published with English translation and comments in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan[2].

(iii) A *fatwā* (*i.e.*, legal decision) on the unlawfulness of holding congregational prayers of Friday and *'Īd* in the villages of Bengal. This is an important document, composed in mixed Arabic and Urdu languages (most of the Urdu portion being the translation of Arabic passages) and printed on a big sheet of paper measuring 16½ × 26½ inches and consisting 91 lines in small script. It was sponsored by Mawlawī Abū Yaḥyā Muḥammad Nūr al-Dīn son of the famous *Farā'iḍī* theologian Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār of Faridpur district[3], and was approved and signed by twenty *Farā'iḍī* theologians of Eastern Bengal. It gives in a nutshell the views and arguments of the *Farā'iḍīs* on the subject.

The document was printed apparently during the first decade of the twentieth century (sometimes after A.D. 1903) for distribution among the Farā'iḍī *khalifahs* with a view to equip them for withstanding the criticism of their opponents. This copy of the *fatwā* was recovered by the present writer from a village in the Chandpur subdivision of Tippera district in 1958, and thus far it proves to be a rare document as no other copy of the same has come to light.

1 See *infra.*, Appendix "E", p. 131.

2 See *J.A.S.P.* vol. vi, 1961, pp. 124-131.

3 For the identity of Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār see *infra.*, Appendix "H", p. 146.

It may be observed that its preparation at a later date does not minimse its importance. In the first place, the basic points advanced by this *fatwā* are corroborated by the proceedings of the famous debate held in A.D. 1867 between K͟halīfah ʻAbd al-Jabbār and Mawlānā Karāmat ʻAlī of Jawnpūr, as recorded by the latter[1]. Secondly, the corroboration is also found in two *Farā'iḍī puthis*, published about the same time[2]. The preparation of the *fatwā* and the publication of the *puthis* dealing elaborately with the question of holding the congregational prayer of Friday at this later date point to the growing intensity of the conflict between the *Farā'iḍīs* and their opponents on this subject. This *fatwā* has enabled us to make a comprehensive study of the *Farā'iḍī* views on the subject[3].

(iv) Durr-i-Muḥammad *Puthi*, pp. 9-138, in Bengali language dealing with *Farā'iḍī* doctrines and the life and character of the *Farā'iḍī* leaders. The first 8 pages of the work and a few pages at the end, are missing. From the textual evidence, the completion and publication of the work can be definitely dated in between 1903 and 1906, *i.e.*, before the death of K͟hān Bahādur Saʻīd al-Dīn Aḥmad.

The name of the author, Durr-i-Muḥammad, occurs frequently in the text (*i.e.*, in the *bhanitā*), which may be *nom de plume* of the author. But, since the title page is missing, no other name of the author or the title of the *puthi* could be recovered. In the first place, no other copy of the *puthi* has so far come to light, and secondly, though many old *Farā'iḍīs* including Bāds͟hāh Miyān, recognise the book, are unable to say who was Durr-i-Muḥammad. Hence, we have no alternative but to refer to the work as *Puthi* and to the author as Durr-i-Muḥammad.

Although the *puthi* is written in Bengali language, the preponderance of Arabic and Persian words in the composition indicates

1 See *infra.*, Chapter vii, p. 94 ff.

2 See *infra.*

3 See *infra.*, Chapter vi, p. 72, ff.

that the writer was a skiful theologian. The mode of argument of the author is also worthy of our notice. Every new argument is begun with a tag or a passage from the *Qur'ān*, Prophetic tradition, *fatwā* or any other book of religion, which is reproduced in the original Arabic, Persian or Urdu, and the Bengali portion which follows represents an exposition of the quotation. Hence, we find about 57 quotations of this kind, which, put together even independently of the Bengali, give us a fair idea of the *Farā'iḍī* doctrines. The content of this *puthi* is broadly corroborated by Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī's proccedings referred to above and by the other *puthi* described next.

(v) Nāẓim al-Dīn : *Puthi*, pp. 1-120, in Bengali dealing with *Farā'iḍī* doctrines. The title page and the preface of the work and a few pages at the end of the book, are missing. The middle and the major portion of the *puthi, i e.*, from page 16 to page 111, is a reproduction of Durr-i-Muḥammad's *Puthi* from page 32 to page 138, except that the author of this work, Nāẓim al-Dīn, inserted his own name in the *bhanitā* in place of Durr-i-Muḥammad. Moreover, as the later portion of Durr-i-Muḥammad's *Puthi, i.e.*, following the page 138, is missing and as no other copy is available, it is not possible to ascertain whether the last portion of Nāẓim al-Dīn's work, *i.e.*, from page 111 to 120, is also reproduction of the former or not.

The first 31 and odd pages of Nāẓīm al-Dīn's work gives us an idea of the *Farā'iḍī* attitude towrads the important problems of *ijtihād* (*i.e.*, the principle of fresh investigation into the points of law and rules of morality) and *taqlīd* (*i.e.* , imitation of the authoritative prescriptions of the schools of law). We may, therefore, regard Nāẓim al-Dīn's work as the reproduction of the important portion of Durr-i-Muḥammad's *Puthi* with an introduction.

The above evidence at first suggested to us the possibility of the identification of Nāẓim al-Dīn with Durr-iMuhammad. But the present head of the *Farā'iḍīs*, namely Bādshāh Miyān, who

succeeded to the headship in A.D. 1906, rejects the suggestion categorically. He knew Mawlawī Nāẓim al-Dīn as a learned theologian being an authority on the rules of law and morality, and as a constant companion of his father, Khān Bahādur Sa'īd al-Dīn ; but he is not known to have assumed the pen name Durr-i-Muḥammad. From the biographical data of Khān Bahādur Sa'īd al-Dīn, we know further that Mawlawī Nāẓim al-Dīn accompanied the former to the health resort of Madhupur in Bihār in A.D. 1906 and was present there on the occasion of the Khān Bahādur's death. Moreover, the comparison of the language in the introductory portion of the work with that of the rest which corresponds to Durr-i-Muḥammad's *Puthi*, shows a palpable difference between the two portions. For Durr-i-Muḥammad's language is more flowing and far richer than that of Nāẓim al-Dīn's. Hence, the only alternative, left at our disposal, is to regard Nāẓim al-Dīn's *puthi* as a plagiarism. Nevertheless, knowing fully well that Nāẓim al-Dīn was a *Farā'iḍī* theologian, plagiarism makes no difference for our purpose, as we are more interested in utilizing it for knowing the *Farā'iḍī* doctrines than in ascertaining the character of its author.

(vi) Wazīr 'Alī : *Muslim Ratnahār*, being a sketch of life and career of the *Farā'iḍī* leaders from the earliest time down to B. S. 1335. It was published about 30 years back and is somewhat carelessly written. It is in the form of a *puthi* and consists of 55 pages. It has been utilised sparingly in the present study and that is only when corroboration was found in other sources.

(vii) Munshī 'Abd al-Ḥalīm : *Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh*, a manuscript biography of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh, in Bengali, 22 folios. The author died in the year 1928 or 1929, at the age of 70. The manuscript is claimed to have been written on the basis of the family tradition of his ancestors. His grand father, Mawlawī Iḥsān Allāh was, according to the present head of the *Farā'iḍīs*, a contemporary of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh and both of them were colleagues at the religious seminaries of Makkah. In his later

life, Mawlawī Iḥsān Allāh was made a *Khalīfah* by the Ḥājī, and after the former's death the position of *Khalīfah* was inherited by his son and thereafter by his grandson, Munshī 'Abd al-Ḥalīm, the author of the manuscript. The manuscript was handed over to the present writer by Bādshāh Miyān.

The manuscript is highly informative about Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh's life, and has been accepted by us as a collection of family traditions and on that account having relative value.

(viii) Mawlawī 'Adīl al-Dīn : *Ḥālāt-i-Kār Guzārī*, a manuscript biography of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh and his successors down to 1958, in Persian language, 27 folios. The author was a *Farā'iḍī* theologian and a disciple of Khān Bahādur Sa'īd al-Dīn, the father of the present head of the *Farā'iḍīs*. He was a resident of Madaripur, and died in 1958 at the age of 97. He was educated at the Muḥsiniyah Madrasah, Dacca, and began his career as a teacher at the Chandpur Madrasah. Subsequently, he was appointed Marriage Registrar (*Qāḍī*) by the government and served in that position till A.D. 1944, when he retired. He was a theologian of great renown and a poet in Persian. The present manuscript was written by him at the request of the present Head of the *Farāi'ḍīs*, as is stated in the manuscript itself and personally affirmed by Bādshāh Miyān. We have not, however, utilised it very much for the lack of corroboration of many of its views by other sources.

(ix) A handwritten *sanad* granted by Abā Khālid Rashīd al-Dīn Aḥmad, the present Head of the *Farā'iḍīs*, confirming the hereditary right of *Khilāfat* of Munshi 'Irfān al-Dīn of the village Bajarikhula in the interior of Tippera district, in A.D. 1936. The *sanad* was examined by the present writer during a tour to the *Farā'iḍī* settlement around the village in 1958, and a true copy was taken which is now in the possession of the present writer. This is an evidence of the living influence of the *Farā'iḍī* movement in an attenuated form down to the present day.

B. Contemporary sources throwing light on the Farā'iḍī movement

The following accounts, as will be evident from the date they cover, furnish us more or less with a continuous picture of the growth and development of the *Farā'iḍī* movement. Moreover, as these sources are supplied by the opponents of the *Farā'iḍīs* or by those who looked at their reform movement with suspicion, they provide us with a rich ground for collating and comparing the data derived from the *Farā'iḍi* sources.

(i) *Bengal Criminal Judicial Consultations* (Lower Provinces) 3 April, 1832, No. 6 : *Roobukoree of the Magistrate of Dacca-Jelalpore,* 29 April, 1831 (preserved in the India Office Library, London). It is a *Ru-ba-Kārī* (روبکاری) or an official report of the District Magistrate of Dacca-Jalalpur (which consisted of the modern districts of Dacca and Faridpur) on a criminal suit instituted against Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh and his followers for allegedly assaulting a village of their opponents in the district of Dacca in April, 1831. The document was edited and published by the present writer in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan[1].

(ii) James Taylor : *A Sketch of the Topography and Statistics of Dacca,* Calcutta, A.D. 1840, pp. 248-50 : An account of the reforms introduced by Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh. The author wrote a few months before the death of the Ḥājī.

(iii) Extract from Mr. Dampier's Police report on the outrage of the *Farā'iḍī* peasantry on a Hindu *zamīndār* of Faridpur in A.D. 1842 in *Calcutta Review,* vol. I, A.D. 1844, pp. 215-16.

(iv) *Parliamentary Papers,* Vol. XLIV, 1861, *Indigo Commission, Extract from Minutes of Evidence.* p. 264f : Edward De Latour's evidence before an Inquiry Committee dated 31 July 1860 ; Reply Nos. 3916, 3917, 3918 and 3919 (India Office Library, London).

1 *J.A.S.P.,* vol. vi, pp. 119-24.

It may be noted that Edward De Latour was the Civil and Sessions Judge at the time of giving the above evidence. But earlier he served as a Magistrate in different indigo districts including Maldah and Dinajpur. In 1847, when Dudu Miyān and his numerous followers were being tried at the Sessions Court of Faridpur in the case of their attack on the Panch Char indigo factory of Mr. Dunlop, De Latour was posted there as the Joint Magistrate and Deputy Collector and followed up the case with interest. His evidence on the attrocities of European planters in general and on Dunlop's hotilities to Dudu Miyān in particular, therefore, provides with first hand information.

(v) H. Biveridge : *The District of Bakarganj, its history and statistics*, London, A.D. 1876, pp. 339-41 : Description of an outrage of the *Faraiʾḍīs* on the indigo factory of Mr. Dunlop in A.D. 1846, written on the basis of two letters of a Magistrate dated the 20th February, 1847 and the 20th July, 1847.

(vi) James Wise : *Notes on the Races, Castes and Trades of Eastern Bengal*, London, A.D. 1884, pp. 22-26 : A sketch of the life and career of Ḥājī Sharīʿat Allāh and Dudu Miyān.

(vii) Col. J. E. Gastrell : *Geographical and Statistical Report of the Districts of Jessore, Fureedpore and Backergunge*, Calcutta, A.D. 1868, p. 36, nos. 150-151 : Description of the Farāʾiḍī settlements.

(viii) W. W. Hunter, ed. : *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, London, 2nd ed., A.D. 1885, vol. iv, pp. 398-400, "Faridpur": Description of the later *Farāʾiḍis.*

(ix) Mawlānā Karāmat ʿAlī : *Tazkiyat al-ʿAqāʾid* (Urdu), Calcutta, A. H. 1344 (in the collection of Mawlānā Karāmat ʿAlī's works entitled *Dhakhīrah-i-Karāmat*, published by Muḥammad Saʿīd, vol. 1, pp. 63-84) : Adverse criticism of the *Farāʾiḍī* doctrines.

(x) Mawlānā Karāmat ʿAli : *Ḥujjat-i-Qātiʿ* (Urdu), Calcutta, A.H. 1344 (in *Dhakhīrah-i-Karāmat*, vol. i, pp. 85-124) : Description

of Mawlana's meeting with Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh and Dudu Miyān and the proceedings of his debate with the *Farā'iḍī* theologian Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār.

(xi) Navin Chandra Sen: *Āmār Jīvan* (Bengali), Calcutta, B.S. 1317, vol. iii, pp. 142-46 and 149-55: Description of the conflict between the Hindu *zamīndārs* of Madaripur and the *Farā'iḍī* peasantry.

C. Sources throwing light on the contemporary socio-economic conditions of the Muslims in Bengal.

(i) Mawlānā Karāmat 'Ali: *Mukāshifāt-i-Raḥmat*, (Urdu), Calcutta, A.H. 1344 (in *Dhakhīrah-i-Karāmat*, *op. cit.*, vol. i, pp. 1-32): Description of *bid'āt* or sinful innovations practised by the Muslims during the nineteenth century.

(ii) Mawlānā Karāmat 'Ali: *Qawl al-Thābit* (Urdu), Calcutta, A.H. 1348 (in *Dhakhīrah-i-Karāmat*, vol. ii, pp. 1-107): Description of un-Islamic beliefs and practices of the Muslims in Bengal.

(iii) Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī: *Maqāmi' al-Mubtadī'in* (Urdu); Calcutta A.H. 1348 (in *Dhakhīrah-i-Karāmat*, vol. ii, pp. 177-200): Proceedings of the Mawlānā's debate with a supporter of local customs.

(iv) Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī: *Ḥaqq-al-Yaqīn* (Urdu), Calcutta, A.H. 1348 (in *Dhakhīrah-i-Karāmat*, vol. ii, pp. 201-224): Description of local socio-religious practices of the Muslims in Bengal.

(v) Ḥāfiẓ 'Abd al-Shakūr: *I'lān Wājib al-Idh'ān, Mīlād wa Qiyām par* (Urdu), Calcutta, A. H. 1295: Criticism of *qiyām* or the practice of standing in the *mīlād*.[1]

(vi) Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī: *'Amal bi'l-Ḥadīth* (Persian), *circa*. A.D. 1837 (copy in the Asiatic Society of Pakistan): Exposition of the Mawlawī's policy of encouraging the following of the

1 See *infra.*, Chapter ii, "Other cults, rites and ceremonies".

Prophetic tradition in preference to the prescriptions of the schools of law or *madhhab*.

(vii) Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī: *Quwwat al-Imān* (Urdu), Calcutta, A.H. 1253. An exposition of Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī's policy of encouraging the following of the prescriptions of the schools of law in preference to following Prophetic tradition independently.

(viii) Mawlawī 'Abd al-Jabbār[1]: *Jawāb-i-Quwwat al-Imān* (Urdu), *circa.* A.D. 1837. A critical review of Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī's *Quwwat al-Imān.*

(ix) Mawlawī 'Abd al-Jabbār: *Taqwiyat al-Muslimīn fī Ittibā'-i-Sunnat-i-Sayyid al-Mursalīn* (Urdu), Calcutta, A. H. 1256. A justification of the principle of following Prophetic tradition in preference to the prescriptions of the schools.

(x) Mawlawī 'Abd al-'Alī: *Ṣaḥīfat al-A'māl wa Mir'at al-Aḥwāl* (Persian), *circa.*, A. H. 1302. A description of different social and religious groups in the Muslim society of Bengal with special reference to that of Chittagong during the later half of the nineteenth century.

(xi) Mawlawī Faiḍ Aḥmad: *Fatwā* on the validity of *Fātiḥah* in Persian (manuscript collected by the present writer from the interior of Chittagong).

(xii) Mawlawī Muḥammad 'Abd al-Qādir: *Fatḥ al-Mubīn fī Radd-i-Ẓafar al-Mubīn* (mixed Arabic and Urdu), *circa.* A. H. 1300. A justification of the old socio-religious customs.

(xiii) Mawlawī Saif Allāh Khān: *Fatwā* on the validity of *mīlād sharīf* in Urdu (manuscript collected by the present writer from the interior of Chittagong).

1 This Mawlawī 'Abd al-Jabbār was a resident of Calcutta and a follower of Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd. He should not, therefore, be confused with the *Farā'iḍī khalīfah* 'Abd al-Jabbār.

D. Government Records.

The following documents throw considerable light on the social, religious and economic conditions of the Muslims in Bengal during the nineteenth century and furnish us with a good deal of information about the religious reform movements of the time including the *Farā'iḍī.*

(i) "A Police Report of the Zilah Dacca-Jalalpur, dealing with the manners and morals of the people, dated A.D. 1799" (recovered and edited by the present writer), *Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society*, Karachi, vol. vii, part i, 1959, pp. 24-35.

(ii) *Selections from the Records of the Government of Bengal,* No. xxxiii, *Papers related to Indigo Cultivation in Bengal,* Calcutta, A.D. 1860, 1211 pages.

(*iii*) *Pamphlet on India, the Great Wahhabi Case, being a full report of the Proceedings in the matters of Ameer Khan and Hashamdad Khan* (at the High Court of Calcutta), Calcutta A.D. 1870.

(iv) Lewis A. Mendes: *Report on the Proceedings in the matters of Ameer Khān and Hashamdad Khan,* Part II (being the appeal case of No. iii listed above in the Calcutta High Court), Calcutta, A.D. 1871.

(v) Ḥāfiẓ 'Abd Allāh Ghāzīpūrī: *Ibrā'-i-Ahl-i-Ḥadīth wa'l-Qur'ān mimmā fī Jāmi' al-Shawāhid min al-Tuhmat wa'l-Buhtān* (Urdu), Benaras, A. H. 1304: Being reproduction of the proceedings of a legal suit between the *Ḥanafīs* and the *Ahl-i-Ḥadīth.*

(vi) *Translation of the Proceedings held in two Cases tried in 1847 before the Sessions Judge of Dacca in which Doodoo Miyān and 63 of his Followers belonging to the Sect of Hadjees or Ferazees were charged with Wounding, Plunder, Arson &c.*, being the proceedings of the trial of *Farā'iḍī* leader Dudu Miyān and 63 of his followers in the case of their alleged attack on Mr. Dunlop's indigo factory at Panch Char involving the kidnapping of the

Hindu manager of the factory. Military Orphan Press, Calcutta, 1848, 314+40 pages. It is referred to hereafter as *Trial of Dudu Miyān* as it is popularly known by this latter title.

(vii) Muin-ud-Din Aḥmad K͟hān: *Selections from Bengal Government Records on Wahhabi Trials, 1863-1870*, being selections from the records of the Government of Bengal and Madras relating to the activities of the followers of Sayyid Aḥmad S͟hahīd in Bengal, Bihar, Delhi and Madras. Dacca, Asiatic Society of Pakistan, 1961, 429 pages.

(viii) A Report of the Collector of Faridpur showing the items of taxes and illegal cesses, dated A.D. 1872 (see *infra.*, Appendix C).

(ix) A Report of the Collector of Faridpur on the numerical position of the Hindu and Muslim castes of the district, dated A.D. 1872 (see *infra.*, Appendix A).

(x) A Report of the Collector of Faridpur with regard to the rate of land revenues in the district, dated A.D. 1872 (see *infra.*, Appendix D).

CHAPTER II

SOCIO-RELIGIOUS CONDITION OF MUSLIMS IN NINETEENTH CENTURY BENGAL

The name *Farā'iḍī* is given to the socio-religious movement started by Ḥāji Sharī'at Allāh in A.D. 1818 and continued by his followers down to the present day. The movement spread over Eastern Bengal and Assam, especially in the rural areas of East Pakistan.[1]

The term "*Farā'iḍī*" is derived from the Arabic word "farā'iḍ", plural of "farīḍah", which means "an obligatory duty" enjoined by Islām. The *Farā'iḍīs* are, therefore, those who aimed at enforcing the obligatory religious duties. They, however, interpreted the term "farā'iḍ" in a broad sense to include all the religious duties enjoined by God and the Prophet irrespective of their importance[2] though they laid emphasis on the observance of five fundamental institutions (*binā'*) of Islām, *viz.*, (i) the profession of the dogma of faith *(kalimah)*, (ii) attending daily prayers *(ṣalāt* or *namāz)*, (iii) fasting during the month of *Ramaḍān (ṣawm* or *roẓah)*, (iv) paying poor-tax *(zakāt)*, and (v) pilgrimage to Makkah *(ḥajj)*[3]. The object of this emphasis on the fundamental institutions was to focus the attention of the masses to the importance of their

1 See *infra.*, Chapter IX, p. 116f.

2 In strict theological sense, the term "farīḍah" means "an obligatory duty" expressly enjoined by the *Qur'ān*, in which belief as well as practice are necessary. In general, there are four gradations of religious duties that are recognised by *sharī'ah*, *viz.*, (i) *farīḍah* or obligatory duty, (ii) *wājib* or near obligatory duty, *i.e.*, the practice of which is necessary, (iii) *sunnah* or the Prophetic usage which "ought" to be practised, and *mustahab* or the practice of which is "desirable". The *Farā'iḍīs* intended to enforce not only the first category of these duties but all of them as it is evident from the formula of *Tawbah* (see *infra.*, Chapter vi, p. 61).

3 For details, see *infra.*, Chapter vi, p. 63.

observance, as the Muslims of Bengal in their enthusiasm to celebrate various local cults, rites and ceremonies had become negligent to these fundamental duties.

Thus, from historical point of view, the *Farā'iḍī* movement was born out of the necessity for "self-correction" of the Muslim society of Bengal. This movement being the foremost of all other religious reform movements in Bengal, the credit for realising the necessity of "self-correction" for the first time, goes to its founder, Ḥāji Sharī'at Allāh (died A.D. 1840). The fact that he identified himself with the religious school of the masses of Bengāl, *i.e.*, *Ḥanafī madhhab*[1], is thus significant.

Secondly, from doctrinal point of view, the *Farā'iḍīs* laid utmost emphasis on the necessity of adhering strictly to the doctrine of *tawḥīd* or monotheism. They were not, however, satisfied with the conventional interpretation of the doctrine, which required merely "belief" in the unity of God. They insisted also on putting this belief into practice. This, according to them, calls upon a Muslim to refrain from indulging in any belief or practice which has the remotest resemblance to polytheism. Hence, Hāji Sharī'at Allāh disapproved of local cults, customs and ceremonies that had no basis in the *Qur'ān* and the Prophetic tradition, called them polytheism *(shirk)* and sinful innovation *(bid'ah)*, and abolished all such deviations from the orignial teachings of Islām from the *Farā'iḍī* society[2]. The *Farā'iḍī* doctrine of *tawḥid*, therefore, induced them, not only to go back to simple monotheism of of the Qur'ān but also to purge the Muslim society of all superstitious beliefs and practices which hedged around the original doctrines and institutions of Islām[3].

Thus, the *Farā'idī* movement can be characterised as representing a puritanic revivalism with the object of going back to the

1 See "Tomb Inscription of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh" (contributed by the present writer), in *J A.S.P.*, vol. iii, 1958, p. 195 ff.

2 For details, see *infra.*, Chapter iii, p. 7 ff., and Chapter vi, p. 80 ff.

3 See *infra.*, Section B.

pristine Islām on the one hand, and that of purging Muslim society of all un-Islamic innovations on the other. In this context, it is worth-while to analyse how far the *Farā'iḍī* movement resembles other puritanic revivalism of the time, namely the *Wahhābī* movement of Arabia and *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah* movement (wrongly called "Indian Wahhabism") of Delhi.

Thirdly, Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh found his disciples mostly from the lower classes, such as cultivators, weavers and oil-grinder[1]. The Ḥājī being primarily a religious reformer, confined himself to a religious programme which had little to do with the political and economic conditions of the people. But as will be seen later, the peasantry who came to the *Farā'iḍī*-fold were not looked with favour by the Hindu *zamīndārs* (landlords). The affront that arose in consequence of the hostile policy of the *zamīndārs*, induced Dudu Miyān (the son and successor of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh) to introduce a socio-economic programme into the *Farā'iḍī* society.[2] He accomplished this (A.D. 1840—1862) by uniting the *Farā'iḍīs* into a compact hierarchical organisation known as *khilāfat* system, which was purported to (i) safeguarding the interests of the *Farā'iḍīs* from the oppressive hands of the *zamīndārs* and indigo planters on the one hand, and (ii) securing social justice amongst themselves on the other[3]. This socio-economic phase of the *Farā'iḍī* movement, as will be seen later, provided a platform for the peasant agitation against the oppressive *zamīndārs*, indigo planters and their agents[4].

Thus, the *Farā'iḍī* movement may also be regarded as representing a socio-economic wave of the time. In this respect, it displayed close affinity with the religio-economic reform movement led by Titu Mīr (from A.D. 1827 to 1831) in West Bengal[5].

1 See *infra.*, Chapter vi, p. 86.
2 See *infra.*, Chapter viii, p. 104 ff.
3 *Ibid.*, p. 105 ff.
4 See *infra.*, Chapters iv and viii.
5 See *infra.*, "Titu Mir's Religious Reforms".

It may also be noted that the *Farā'iḍī* movement spread only in Eastern Bengal and Assam, especially in the rural areas. In well-established towns and cities, such as Dacca, Comilla and Chittagong, where the Muslim upper classes had considerable influence, its appeal was practically ineffective. Furthermore, it spread most extensively in those rural areas where the Hindu *zamīndārs* held sway over the Muslim peasantry, *i.e.*, in the districts of Bakarganj, Faridpur, Dacca, Mymensingh and Tippera[1]. Even so, no man of consequence or whealth is known to have become a *Farā'iḍi* follower. It may, therefore, be stated as a rough generalisation that the appeal of the *Farā'iḍī* movement was most effective amongst the lower classes of the Muslims, and that it flourished mostly in the unenlightened rural society of the Muslims of Eastern Bengal (now East Pakistan).

The masses of the people apparently sought relief by joining the new movement, which offered them social equality[2] and safeguard from the oppression of the non-Muslim landed gentry. This socio-economic bias of the *Farā'iḍī* movement increased under the dominating personality of Dudu Miyān and became instrumental to the spread of the *Farā'iḍī* influence throughout Eastern Bengal. For, he mainly asserted the rights of the peasantry against the *zamīndārs* and indigo planters, and it is, therefore, natural that the oppressed peasantry flocked under his banner. From this angle, there was hardly anything in this movement which could attract the attention of the towns-people. Hence, we find lukewarmness on the part of the Muslims living in the towns and cities who had their own peculiar problems to solve. As long as the *Farā'iḍī* leaders met the socio-economic needs of the people, it floursihed extensively as we see in the time of Dudu Miyān and its decline can be traced to the withering away of this socio-economic bias. Today the *Farā'iḍīs* survive mainly as a religious group.

1 See *infra.*, Chapter ix, p. 116 ff.
2 See *infra.*, Chapter iv and viii.

Thus, the *Farā'iḍī* movement was a complex historical phenomenon which represented a phase of the Islamic revivalism of the time on the one hand and the socio-economic aspirations of the lower classes of the rural Bengal on the other. It is, therefore, in the fitness of things that the *Farā'iḍī* movement be examined in the context of contemporary Islamic revivalism as well as against the socio-religious conditions of Bengal, in order to bring out the real perspective in which it grew and developed. This is attempted in the following three sections.

SECTION A

Islamic Revivalism of the Nineteenth Century

The contemporary religious movements that may claim similarity with the *Farā'iḍī* movement are (i) *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah* of Delhi and *Wahhābī* movement of Arabia. In fact, these three religious reform movements represented the Islamic revivalism of the nineteenth century, and because of certain doctrinal similarities of the *Farā'iḍī* with the other two movements, it has often been confused by the scholars with them. Likewise, the term "Indian Wahhabism" is applied by the European scholars to the *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah* movement. An examination of these points are, therefore, necessary.

Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah : The religious reform movement of Delhi was started by Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd (A.D. 1786-1831) and Shāh Ismā'īl Shahīd (*circa.*, A.D. 1782-1831), about the same time when Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh inaugurated the *Farā'iḍī* movement in Eastern Bengal, *i.e.*, A.D. 1818. The term "Indian Wahhabism" applied to this movement by European scholars as found in Hunter's *Our Indian Musalmāns, Encyclopaedia of Islām* and other works is not borne out by contemporary and later sources.

(i) Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd says, "My *ṭarīqah* (*i.e.*, path) is the *ṭarīqah* of my grand father" the Prophet himself. Accordingly,

"I take a full meal of dry bread on one day and thank God; on the other day I keep hungry and bear it with patience."[1]

(ii) In A.D. 1829, an opponent of this reform movement questioned the propriety of the practice of Sayyid Aḥmad, who "called his own *ṭarīqah* as Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah"[2]. A lenghty answer to this objection was, therefore, given by Mawlawī Irtiḍā 'Alī, a follower of the Sayyid, in which he maintained that the term was used in a general sense without any intention to exclude other *ṭarīqahs* or paths of the *ṣūfīs* (*i.e.*, Muslim mystics) from being *Muḥammadī* (*i.e.*, the path of Muḥammad)[3].

(iii) In A.D. 1837, Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī says that some of the followers of Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd who professed to follow the *Qur'ān* and Prophetic tradition by means of their own independent judgment (*ijtihād*), called themselves *Muḥammadī* (*i.e.* an abbreviation of *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah*)[4]. It is further clear from the context that Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī meant the main body of the followers of Sayyid Aḥmad led by Mawlāwī Wilāyat 'Alī of Patna, who were opposed to his own group[5]. Being a follower of the Sayyid, he, however, claims himself to be a "Muḥammadi" in a different sense. He explains that Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd did not apply the term "Muḥammadi" to his reform movement but used it just as a collective name for the

1 Ghulām Rasūl Mehr: *Jamā'at-i-Mujāhidīn*, Lahore, 1955, p. 69 (quoted from MS. *Majmū'ah Makātīb-i-Shāh Ismā'īl*. p. 282):
"طریقهٔ من طریقهٔ جد خود سیدالمرسلین است - یک روز نان خشک سیر می خورم
و شکر خدا بجا می آرم و یک روز گرسنه می مانم و صبر می کنم - "

2 'Abd Allāh ibn Sayyid Bahādur 'Alī, ed.: *Jawāb-i-Istiftā Mīr Muḥammad 'Alī*. Maṭba'-i-Aḥmadī, A.H. 1245/A.D. 1829, p. 9. The question reads:
"مذهب نواحداث و طریقه بعد از تحقیق مفهوم ان و تعریفش بجناب رسول خدا صلعم
صحیح است یا نه ؟
آری سید احمد صاحب طریقه خود را طریقهٔ محمدیه می گویند - "

3 *Ibid.*, p. 90.

4 *Cf.* Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī: *Quwwat al-Imān*. Calcutta, A.H. 1253/A.D. 1837, pp. 135 and 197.

5 See *infra.*, "Split among the followers of Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah".

Qādiriyah, Chishtiyah, Naqshbandiyah and *Mujaddidiyah* mystic orders as reformed and practised by him. In his opinion, the *Muḥammadiyah* did not represent a fifth mystic order but a higher level of mystic realisation in the orders mentioned above[1]. Thus. Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī called himself a *Muḥammadiyah* in this mystic sense.

(iv) According to the family records of Mawlawī 'Ināyat 'Alī (who from A.D. 1831 was the chief exponent of the Sayyid's doctrines in Bengal), his followers in Bengal were known as Muḥammadī[2].

(v) The followers of one of its successor movements, *Ahl-i-Ḥadīth*[3] call themselves *Muḥammadī* down to the present day; for, according to them, they do not follow any other *ism* but the path shown by the Prophet himself.

(vi) In the "Great Wahhābī Case" of A.D. 1870 in the Calcutta High Court, the accused persons who were the followers of the Sayyid's reform movement, protested against the term "Wahhābī" applied to them and submitted that they did not regard Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb as their leader. They appealed to the Judge to refer to them as *sunnī, i.e.*, the follower of the tradition of the Prophet, as distinguished from *bid'atī* or the follower of sinful innovation[4].

(vii) Bevan Jones says that the orthodox Mawlawīs opposed the drastic reform of the followers of Sāyyid Aḥmad Shahīd and "nicknamed them Wahhābīs"[5].

1 *Cf.* Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī : *Quwwat al-Imān, op. cit.*, p. 198.

2 *Cf.* Abd al-Rahim *al-Durar al-Manthūr fī Tarājim-i-Ahl-i-Ṣādiqpūr*. Ilāhābād A.H. 1345, p. 133.

3 *Cf.* Ḥāfiẓ 'Abd al-Shakūr : *I'lān Wājib al-Idh'ān.* Calcutta, A.H. 1295, p. 1 ; and Aḥmad 'Alī : *Aqidā-i-Muḥammadī bā Madhhāb-i-Ahl-i-Hādith* (Bengali), Khulna, B.S. 1362, pp. iii-iv (The title itself is revealing).

4 *Pamphlet on India : The Great Wahhabi Case, being a full report of the proceedings in the matters of Ameer Khan and Hashmadad Khān.* Calcutta, 1870, p. 1.

5 L. Bevan Jones : *The People of the Mosque,* London, 1932, p. 206.

(viii) It wlil be seen in the following pages that the reform movement of Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd belonged to the tradition of Shāh Walī Allāh of Delhi and had no historical connection with the *Wahhābī* movement of Arabia, and that the basis of their doctrines were laid on different assumptions[1].

The above evidence goes against the term "Wahhabism" or "Indian Wahhabism" as applied to the followers of Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd. The modern Muslim scholars of Indo-Pakistan subcontinent protest against the application of the term to this movement[2]. No generally acceptable name has, however, been suggested by the scholars so far.

Tasadduq Husain Khalid calls it "Targhīb-i-Muḥammadiyah"[3], *i.e.*, *targhīb-i-sunnat-i-Muḥammadiyah*, or the movement which encouraged the following of Prophetic tradition. It will be seen in the following pages that the central point of the reform programme of Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd and his followers was to focus attention to the necessity of following strictly the tradition of the Prophet (*i.e., ittibā'-i-sunnat)*. But the term suggested above has not been used by them.

Dr. Mahmud Husain disapproves of Hunter's theory that Sayyid Aḥmad's movement was an off-shoot of the Wahhabism of Arabia. He, however, refrains from suggesting an alternative nomenclature. On the other hand, he regards *Muḥammadiyah* as a new mystic order or *ṭarīqah*, founded by Sayyid Aḥmad[4]. We have seen above that the exclusive application of the term "Muḥammadiyah" to mystic order is supported by Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī though he contended that Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd used it in a collective sense to mean the four well-known mystic orders. The

1 See *infra.*

2 See Shaykh Muḥammad Ikrām : *Mawj-i-Kawthar*, Lahore, *circa.*, 1948, p. 28 f. ; and *History of the Freedom Movement*, Karachi, 1957, p. 564.

3 See Abdullah Butt, ed., : *Aspects of Shāh Ismā'īl Shahīd*, Lahore, 1943, p. 65 f.

4 *Cf. History of the Freedom Movement, op. cit.*, pp. 564 and 572,

use of the term in a mystic sense is also hinted in the second item of evidence quoted above. The use of the term "ṭarīqah" by Sayyid Aḥmad himself, as quoted above in the first item of our list, and a close examination of the context, however, does not give any indication that he used it specifically for mystic order as different from the general programme of his reform. The point, therefore, demands a careful analysis.

In the first place, Sayyid Aḥmad S͟hahīd says that his "ṭarīqah" is the *ṭarīqah* of the Prophet himself. He continues in the same passage, "My troops are like those *Muhājirs* (*i.e.*, those who accompanied the Prophet in his flight to Madīnah), who came out to serve the interests of the religion of God and risked their lives with enthusiasm"[1]. In another place of the same book, he says, "We have forsaken our family and relatives in order to carry out the injunctions of God and to revive the tradition of the Prophet".[2] It is, therefore, clear that in the above context he is speaking of holy war against the Sikhs of the Punjab and the revival of the tradition of the Prophet and not of his progress in the mystic path or of mystic order alone. Hence, the use of the term "ṭarīqah" in this context must be under stood in the literal sense, which means "a path" or "a way", and not in the specific mystic sense meaning "a mystic order".

This interpretation of "ṭarīqah" is further supported by the fact that in *Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaqīm* (the most authentic work on the reform programme of Sayyid Aḥmad S͟hahīd), the Sayyid divides his programme of reform into two constituent parts, which he calls *rāh* or path (the Persian equivalent of the Arabic *ṭarīqah*), *i.e.*, (i) *rah-i-wilāyat* or the path of mysticism, and (ii) *rah-i-nabūwwat* or the path of prophecy, one being complementary to the other[3]. In other words, in his programme of reform, he attempted a synthesis

1 G͟hulām Rasūl Mehr : *Jamā'at-i-Mujāhidīn*, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 68.

3 S͟hāh Ismā'īl S͟hahīd : *Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaqīm* (copy Asiatic Society of Pakistan, Dacca). p. 1 f.

of *sharī'ah* (the legal system) wilh *ṭarīqah* (mysticism) ; and as the only gate of entrance to his reform movement was through (mystic) initiation, *i.e.*, *bay'at-i-tawbah*, it is not possible to disjoint mysticism from the rest of the programme of his reform. In his explanation of *bay'at-i-tawbah* (*i.e.*, the well-known procedure of initiation into the mystic orders of the *ṣūfis*), the Sayyid says[1] :

> "First of all, the seeker of this path (*i.e.*, the path of prophecy) ought to attend to the prohibitions of the *sharī'ah* relating to faith, action, morality, instinct, desire and prayer. He must seek and find out (the rules) from the *Qur'ān* and Prophetic tradition. If he possesses knowledge of the *Qur'ān* and Prophetic tradition, he must find them out himself or else he must enlighten himself from the opinions of the learned scholars of the Prophetic tradition."

Hence it is clear that mysticism of Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd was nothing specifically separate from his programme of reviving Prophetic tradition. In our opinion, therefore, the reform movement of Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd can be fairly designated as "Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah", the term used by him and his followers.

Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah and Wahhabism and their Affiliation : The term "Tarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah" means "the path of Muḥammad", *i.e.*, the true path of Islām. It belonged to the reformist tradition of Shāh Walī Allāh of Delhi (A.D. 1703-1763). On the other hand, the *Wahhābī* movement of Arabia was started by Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb of Najd (A.D. 1703-1792). Recently, we have shown in an article that these two great thinkers (Shāh Walī Allāh and Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb) of the eighteenth century, having replenished their spirit from the religious seminaries of Makkah and Madīnah, inaugurated an era of Islamic revivalism in the Muslim world by their emphasis on the necessity of re-asserting the principle of *ijtihād* (*i.e.*, fresh inquiry into the

1 Shāh Ismā'īl Shahīd *Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaqīm* (copy Asiatic Society of Pakistan, Dacca), p. 144.

Qur'ān and Prophetic tradition with a view to forming independent judgment on legal question[1]). From the doctrinal point of view, this implies, in the first place, rejection of the finality of the schools of law *(madhhab)* ; secondly, rejection of the principle of *taqlīd* (*i.e.*, adherence to the prescriptions of the schools of law considering them as authoritative and right without investigating into the correctness of the reasons on which they are based), as a sound rule of religion ; and thirdly, preference of the principle of following Prophetic tradition (*ittibā'-i-sunnah*) to the prescriptions of the schools as embodied in the books of law *(fiqh)* and legal opinions *(fatāwā)*[2].

It has been further shown in the article mentioned above that from the fourth century *Hijrah* onwards, the principle of *ijtihad* was gradually superseded by the principle of *taqlīd* among the *sunnī* Muslims and the four schools of law namely, *Ḥanafī*, *Shafi'ī*, *Mālikī*, *and Ḥanbalī*, were recognized as authoritative and final ; so that it was deemed necessary for every *sunnī* to belong to one of the four schools[3]. Thus, the emphasis on the principle of *ijtihād* signalised a reversion of the process. Shāh Walī Allāh says that we have been invited to accept the mission of the Prophet through investigation and understanding (*ijtihad*) and not through imitation or *tiqlīd* of others[4]. In a statement of policy on Wahhabism, 'Abd Allāh son of Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb says[5] :

> "We do not claim to exercise our reason in all matters of religion...save that we follow our judgment where a point is clearly demonstrated to us in either the *Qur'ān* or the *Sunnah* (*i.e.*, Prophetic tradition) still in force".

1 See "Shāh Walī Allāh's Conception of Ijtihād" (contributed by the present writer), *J.P.H.S.*, vol, vii, part iii, 1959, pp. 165 f. and 193 f.

2 See *Ibid.*, p. 165 ff.

3 See *Ibid*, p. 166 ff.

4 See *ibid.*, pp. 179 and 186.

5 *Cf.* 'History and Doctrines of the Wahhabis", translated into English by J. O'Kinealy, *J.A.S.B.*, vol. xiii, Calcutta, 1874, p. 68 f.

This bold step taken by the two thinkers of the eighteenth century, prepared the ground for the subsequent trend of rethinking of the Islamic past and the revivalist movements of the nineteenth century drew their inspiration from this source. However similar was the emphasis laid down by these two great thinkers, the historical background against which it was set by each one of them was somewhat different which eventually also produced different results.

From historical point of view, the emphasis of Shāh Walī Allāh on the principle of *ijtihād* implied a protest against the form of orthodoxy that was prevalent in his time in Indo-Pakistan subcontinent, especially as it was tightened by the compilation of *Fatāwa-i-'Ālamgīrī* (a huge collection of legal opinions) under the commission of Emperor Awrangzīb. Shāh Walī Allāh complains that the religious scholars of his time neglected the study of the *Qur'ān* and the Prophetic tradition and cared only for the *fiqh* (the science of law) and other theoretical sciences. the former for securing government posts and the latter for holding verbal duels and hair-slitting controversies among themselves.[1]

At a later time Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī asserted that he belonged to the old school[2], and, on the authority of Shāh Walī Allāh's predecessors Shaykh 'Abd al-Ḥaq Muḥaddith Dehlawī and Shaykh Aḥmad Sarhindī (Mujaddid-i-Alf-i-Thānī), stated that the school of *Ahl-i-Sunnat wa'l-Jamā'at* (*i.e.*, the *sunnī* school) consisted of only four schools of law, namely *Ḥanafī*, *Shāfi'ī*, *Mālikī*, and *Ḥanbalī* and that these schools were fixed by the consensus of the opinion of the Muslim community (*ijma'*); for "whatever rules of law might have been elicited from the *Qur'ān* and the Prophetic tradition actually became manifest on these four paths and no fifth path came to light".[3] Shāh Walī Allāh being a product of the time, believed (before his visit to Makkah in A.D. 1730-1733)

1 *Cf.* Shāh Walī Allāh : *Inṣāf fi Bayān-i-Sabab al-Ikhtilāf*, p. 86.

2 *Cf.* Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī : *Quwwat al-Īmān*, Calcutta, A.H. 1253, p. 292,

3 *Ibid.*, pp. 39 and 82.

that imitation or *taqlīd* of the prescriptions of the four schools was firmly established and the gate of *ijtihād* was closed[1]. But, later on, when he embarked on the trend of Islamic revivalism (after his return from Makkah), he did not hesitate even to compare *taqlīd* with the habit of the ants. He says :[2]

> "They gratified themselves with *taqlīd* and the practice of *taqlīd* set firmly in their hearts like the habit of the ants, while they were unmindful".

Likewise, Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb's emphasis on the principle of *ijtihād* implied a protest against the system of law and morality that was prevalent in Arabia under the Turkish rule[3]. The religious reforms that he advocated were twofold, vlz., (i) complete acceptance of the first principie of Islām, namely the dogma : there is no God but Allah, and (ii) purging the Muslim society of all deviation from the original teachings of *Islām*, which he condemned as polytheism (*shirk*) or sinful innovation (*bid'ah*). Even Greek logic was condemned and books of logic were banned[4]. These twofold measures were collectively called the doctrine of *tawḥīd* or monotheism, and this being the central point of his reforms, Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb called himself and his followers *muwaḥḥidūn* or the protagonists of the doctrine of the unity of God, though the adversaries including the Europeans designated his reform movement as *Wahhābiyah* or Wahhabism[5], by way of reproach. Thus, Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb aimed at a return to the golden past of Islām, *i.e.*, the time of the Prophet and the three succeeding generations (*salaf-i-ṣāliḥīn*).

Shāh Walī Allāh, on the other hand, sought for an integration or synthesis (*taṭbīq*) of the whole structure of Islāmic tradition

1 Shāh Walī Allāh : *Muṣsaffā*, p. 12.

2 Shāh Walī Allāh : *Ḥujjat Allāh al-Bālighah*, Lahore, *circa.*, A.H. 1323, vol. i, p. 303.

3 "History of the Doctrines of Wahhabis", *op. cit.*, *J.A.S.B.*, vol. xiii, p. 68 f.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 74.

5 *Cf. Encyclopaedia of Islām*, vol. iv, Art. "Wahhābiyah".

including its historical legacy. Hence, unlike Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb, he accepted Greek syllogism as a legitimate heritage of historical Islām to be utilised for *ijtihād*[1]. The central point of Shāh Walī Allāh's reform lay in encouraging his co-religionists to follow Prophetic tradition from the original sources, *i.e.*, *ittibā'-i-sunnah*[2], in preference to following blindly the prescriptions of the schools. He, therefore, concentrated all his efforts in stimulating intellectual thinking among the Muslims of Indo-Pakistan subcontinent, so as to prepare them for a comprehensive reform—social, political, economic and religious[3]. In the context of this larger scheme, he was also desirous of purging the Muslim society of polytheistic accretions and wrote an epistle entitled *Tuḥfat al-Muwaḥḥidīn* (gift of the protagonists of the doctrine of the unity of God). Like Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb's *Kitāb al-Tawḥīd* (book on the doctrine of the unity of God), this work seeks to establish pure monotheism of Islām and to purge the society of all polytheism (*shirk*) and sinful innovation *(bid'ah)*. These two works, therefore, provide a meeting ground between the two reformers, and it is interesting to note that *Tarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah* movement, which was a revolutionary outcome of the spirit of reformation bequeathed by Shāh Walī Allāh, took special cognisance of *Tuḥfat al-Muwaḥḥidin*. In fact, *Taqwiyat al-Īmān* of Shāh Ismā'īl Shahīd, one of the most important pamphlets of the movement, has been regarded by modern scholars as an elaboration of *Tūḥfat al-Muwaḥḥidīn*[4].

Naturally, therefore, a remarkable similarity is observed between *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah* and Wahhābī movement, especially in so far as their reform measures concern with the doctrine of monotheism and purging of un-Islamic innovations, which led

1 See *J.P.H.S.* vol. vii, part iii, p. 181.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 186 f.

3 *Ibid.*, pp. 165-194 (article of the present writer) for the socio-religious side of Shāh Walī Allāh's reform and K.A. Nizami, "Shah Waliullah II", *History of the Freedom Movement*, Karachi, 1957, pp. 512-541, for the economic and political side of his reform.

4 See *History of the Freedom Movement*, *op. cit.*, p. 540 and 'Abd al-Raḥīm, tr. *Ḥujjat Allāh al-Bālighah* (Urdu translation), Lahore, 1953, vol. i, p. 81.

the European writers to identify the two reform movements and even to apply the term "Indian Wahhabism" to *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah* though there is no historical evidence of any contact of *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah* with Wahhabism of Arabia in its formative stage.

In the first place, one of the enunciators of *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah*, S͟hāh Ismā'īl S͟hahīd was a grandson of S͟hāh Walī Allāh[1], and the other, Sayyid Aḥmad S͟hahīd, was a student and disciple of S͟hāh 'Abd al-'Azīz[2] son of S͟hāh Walī Allāh. Both of them received their education and training under S͟hāh 'Abd al-'Azīz at Delhī, and did not visit Arabia till A.D. 1822, when their reform movement was in the full swing. Secondly, *Taqwiyat al-Imān* of Ismā'īl S͟hahīd the subject-matter of which has the greatest affinity with the *Wahhābī* doctrine of *Tawḥīd* or monotheism, was written before his visit to Makkah[3]. Thirdly, when Sayyid Aḥmad S͟hahīd and Ismā'īl S͟hahīd visited Makkah and Madīnah in A,D. 1822-1823, *Wahhābī* movement was at a very low ebb in Arabia. Fourthly, Muḥammad ibn 'Abd al-Wahhāb rejected mysticism as an un-Islāmic innovation, whereas S͟hāh Walī Allāh regarded sufism as a basic psychological need for the spiritual development of man, and the *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah* assigned to mystic path (*rah-i-wilāyat*) as much importance as it attached to the path of prophecy (*rah-i-nabūwwat*) . Fifthly, we have seen earlier that the central objective of *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah* was the revivification of the Prophetic tradition, which was also aimed at by S͟hāh Walī Allāh; whereas Wahhabism revolved around the new interpretation of the doctrine of *tawḥīd* or monotheism. Thus, the identification of the two movements or to regard *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah* as an off-shoot of Wahhabism has no historical or doctrinal basis. The agreement of the two in so far as the doctrine of *tawḥīd* is concerned, therefore, may have been due to similar influences exerted by S͟hāh Walī Allāh on *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah* and

1 See Abū Yaḥyā Imām K͟hān Naws͟hahrawī : *Tarājim-i-'Ulamā'-Ḥadīt͟h-i-Hind,* Delhi, A.H. 1356, p. 69 f.

2 See *History of the Freedom Movement,* Karachi, 1957, p. 559 f.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 564.

Muḥammad ibn ʻAbd al-Wahhāb on Wahhabism, as has been explained above.

Similarities and Differences among the Farā'iḍī Movement, Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah and Wahhabism :—The *Farā'iḍī* doctrine of *tawḥīd* or monotheism consisted of two parts, (i) enforcement of the doctrine of the unity of God, and (ii) purging the society of all polytheistic and sinful accretions. This corresponds exactly with the *Wahhābi* position on the same doctrine[1]. In the preface of *Taqwiyat al-Īmān*, S͟hah Ismāʻīl S͟hahīd says that the work would consist of two parts, the first part dealing with "the doctrine of *tawḥīd*" or the unity of God, and the evil consequence of *s͟hirk* or polytheism. The second part would deal with the virtues of following Prophetic tradition and the vices of following *bidʻat* or sinful innovation[2]. Although the second part was not completed by the author, the subjects that were earmarked for the part have been elaborately dealt with in the next publication of the movement *Ṣirāṭ al-Mustaqīm*. Thus, it is evident that on the doctrine of *tawḥīd* the *Farā'iḍī*, *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah* and the *Wahhābi* stood on the same grouud.

This initial agreement between the *Farā'iḍī* and the two other movements, however, must not be pressed too far; for the *Farā'iḍī* also had fundamental doctrinal differences with both of them. We have seen that *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah* and *Wahhābī* movements laid emphasis on the necessity of following Prophetic tradition in preference to the prescriptions of the schools. The *Farā'iḍī* stood just the other way around.

In the first place, Ḥājī S͟harīʻat Allāh has been described in his tomb inscription as a follower of the *Ḥanafī* school of law[3]. Secondly, in a *Farā'iḍī fatwā* on the question of holding congregational prayers of *Jumʻah* and ʻĪd, the authors pleaded the

1 See *supra*.

2 See Mawlawī Muḥammad Ismāʻīl S͟hahīd : *Taqwiyat al-Īmān*. Banglore, A.H. 1371, preface by the author.

3 See *J.A.S.P.*, vol. iii, 1958, pp. 197-98.

superiority of the *Ḥanafī* school of law to all other schools[1]. Thirdly, in a *Farā'iḍī Puthi*; Nāẓim al-Dīn says :

"Now let me ask you an important question,
Have you been able to recognise the Imām (*i. e.*, Abū Ḥanīfah) or not ?

I mean, do you follow his prescriptions" ? [2]

"Imām A'ẓam [*i. e.*, Abū Ḥanīfah] is so great and so renowned that no other can stand his example in the world.
If you learn from him,
All doubts would be gone from your mind".[3] ?

"Imām Abū Yūsuf and Imām Muḥammad
The two students (of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah) worked in co-operation,
And made fresh deliberation (*ijtihād*) on religious laws as well as on the worldly affairs,
And wrote down the books of laws (*fiqh*) .

* * *

If those books were not present in the world,
None could understand aught of religion"[4].

1 *Farā'iḍī Fatwā*, recovered by the present writer (see *supra.*, chapter i, Farā'iḍī Sources No. III).

2 Nā im al-Dīn *Puthi*, p. 5 :
"এখন আসল কথা জিজ্ঞাসি তোমারে।
চিনিছ কি না চিনিছ সেই এমামেরে ।।
অর্থাৎ তক্‌লিদ তাঁর কর কি তোমরা।"

3 *Ibid.*
"এত বড় এমাম আজম নামদার।
দুনিয়াতে নাহি হয় মেছাল যাঁহার ।।
সেই এমামের আগে লেহনা চিনিয়া।
তবে ত মনের সন্দেহ যাইবে ঘুচিয়া ।।"

4 *Ibid.*, p. 11.
"এমাম আবু ইউছুক ছাহেব কেবার।
এমাম মোহাম্মদ রহমতুল্লা নামদার ।।

(*Continued on page* xlix)

Fourthly, from the earliest time down to the present day, the *Farā'iḍis* profess to be strict followers of the Ḥanafī school of law[1].

Thus, the *Farā'iḍīs* are not only the followers of the *Ḥanafī* school of law but also the supporters of the finality of the school and the principle of *taqlīd.* Fundamentally, therefore, the *Farā'iḍīs* followed the prescriptions of the school, in preference to the following of Prophetic tradition as the latter was not understandable to them without the deliberations and interpretations of the *imāms* or jurists of the *Ḥanafī* school. The position of *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah* and the *Wahhābī*, as we have seen, was just the opposite.

Many of the followers of *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah,* however, claimed themselves to be *Ḥanafī*; even Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd is said to have followed the prescriptions of the *Ḥanafī* school in most practical matters[2]. Likewise, the *Wahhābīs* affiliated themselves to the *Ḥanbalī* school of law[3]. But their insistence on the necessity of following only those prescriptions of the school which conformed to the Prophetic tradition, and on the principle of following Prophetic tradition in preference to the prescriptions of the schools wherever a point is demonstrated by a sound narration from the Prophet[4], distinguished them from the

(*Continued from page* xlviii)

এই দুই পয়েগম্বান সঙ্গেতে মিলিয়া।
এজতেহাদ করিলেন দীনের লাগিয়া॥
দীন আর দুনিয়ার ভালাই বুঝিয়া।
ফেকার কেতাব আদি গেলেন লিখিয়া॥

* * *

ফেকার কেতাব না থাকিলে দুনিয়াতে।
কোন কথা কেহ নাহি পারিত বুঝিতে॥"

1 Information collected by the present writer from different *Farā'izi* settlements.

2 See *History of the Freedom Movement*, Karachi, 1957, p. 570.

3 See *J.A.S.B.*, vol. xiii, p. 68 f.

4 See Mawlawi Wilāyat 'Alī : *'Amal bi-'l-Ḥadīth, circa.,* A.D. 1837, pp. 2, 4, 12 and 16, for the standpoint of *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah* and *J.A.S.B.*, vol. xiii, p. 68 f. for the standpoint of the *Wahhābī*.

blind imitators of the schools. Hence, on this important point, *Farā'iḍīs* stood on the opposite pole of the two other movements.

From historical point of view, there is no evidence to connect the *Farā'iḍī* movement with the tradition of Shāh Walī Allāh or with *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah* movement. Ḥājī Shar'īat Allāh was educated at the religious seminaries of Arabia from about A.D. 1799 to 1818[1], and a close examination of their doctrines show that the *Farā'iḍī* and *Ṭariqah-i-Muḥammadiyah* belonged to two separate traditions. In the first place, the *Farā'iḍīs* suspended the prayers of *Jum'ah* and *'Īd* in Bengal under the British rule, which acccording to them were not lawful under the circumstances.[2] The followers of *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah*, on the other hand, continued to hold those prayers though they regarded India under the British rule as *Dār al-Ḥarb* or abode of war.[3] Secondly, the *Farā'iḍīs* objected to initiating the ignorant masses (*'awām*) into mystic orders, and to the practice of initiating disciple by clasping hand (*dastī bay'ah*)[4]. These were, on the other hand, widely practised by Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd and his followers.

The biographical data of Ḥajī Sharī'at Allāh suggest that he drew inspiration for his reform movement from Arabia, where he stayed for about 20 years and received his education and training[5]. This period being the most turbulent years of *Wahhābī* revolution in the process of which the *Wahhābīs* occupied Makkah and Madīnah in A.D. 1803[6], Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh had the unique opportunity to watch the progress of Wahhābism from close quarters. As the *Farā'iḍī* doctrine of *tawḥīd* or monotheism corresponds entirely to the same doctrine of Wahhabism, we have historical evidence to assume that it was influenced by Wahhabism.

1 See *infra.*, chapter iii, p. 3.
2 See *infra.*, Chapter vi, p. 72 ff.
3 See *History of the Freedom Movement, op. cit.*, p. 576.
4 See *infra.*, chapters vi and vii.
5 See *infra.*,chapter iii, p. 3 ff.
6 *Cf. J.A.S.B.* vol. xiii, p. 68 f. offers documentary evidence on this point.

This point is further corroborated by the fact that like the *Wahhābī*, Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh laid utmost emphasis on the doctrine of *tawḥīd*[1]. Nevertheless, the *Farā'iḍīs*, as we have just seen, were the supporters of the principle of *taqlīd* whereas the *Wahhābīs* supported *ijtihād*. Secondly, the *Farā'iḍīs* accepted mysticism or sufism, as an Islamic institution and utilised it for the attainment of divine consciousness[2], which was on the other hand, rejected by the *Wahhābīs* who regarded it as an un-Islamic innovation. Thirdly, the *Wahhābīs* affiliated themselves to the *Ḥanbalī* school and the *Farā'iḍīs* to the *Ḥanafī* school, and the latter referred all important questions of law to the authority of Ṭāhir Sombal Ḥanafī, the teacher and mystic guide of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh[3]. Thus, although the influence of Wahhabism on the *Farā'iḍī* cannot be gainsaid, yet we do not have sufficient ground to identify the one with the other or even to regard the *Farā'iḍī* movement as an off-shoot of the *Wahhābī* movement.

Successor Movements of Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah and their relations with the Farā'iḍi Movements : Although *Ṭarīqah-i-Mūḥammadiyah* movement was started as a religious reform movement about A.D. 1818, it took a political turn within a few years and spread throughout Indo-Pakistan subcontinent with extraordinary rapidity. In course of time, it also split up into three distinct groups, namely the Patna school, *Ta'aiyunī* and *Ahl-i-Ḥadīth*. The history of the growth and development of *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥāmmadiyah* falls outside the scope of the present study. But an examination of the role played by it and its suceessor movements in Bengal and the nature of their contact with the *Farā'iḍīs*, is relevant to our purpose. Moveover, the intensification of religious propaganda by these successor movements in rural Bengal, their mutual antagonism and their rivalry with the *Farā'iḍī* movement have deeply affected the outlook of the Muslims of Bengal. In order to understand the attitude of the

1 See *infra.*, chapter vi, p. 65.
2 See *infra.*, chapters vi and vii.
3 See *infra.*, chapter iii, p. 4 ff.

Farā'iḍī to these rival groups and *vice versa*, an analysis of the historical and doctrinal grounds of the split of *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah* is necessary.

Split among the followers of Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah: The principle of preferential treatment of the Prophetic tradition (*ittibā'-i-sunnah*) to the prescription of the schools of law (*taqlīd*), formed the central point in the reform programme of *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah.* Differences of opinion, however, appear to have arisen amongst the leaders of the movement, especially after the death of Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd and Shāh Ismā'il Shahīd at the battle of Balakot in A.D. 1831. From about A.D. 1837 to 1840, three leading disciples of Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd came out with three somewhat distinct views relating to the point mentioned above. The first was advanced by Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī, the chief successor of Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd[1], who reiterated the policy of *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah* giving preference to the Prophetic tradition. The second view was advanced by Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī of Jawnpur, a leading disciple of Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd[2], who asserted the claim of the finality of the schools and

1 Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī (A.D, 1790-1852) was a theologian of Patna who met Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd in A.D, 1820 and became his disciple. Thereupon he was invested by the Sayyid with *khilāfat* and given the charge of the Patna disciples. In A.D. 1831 when he was touring South India the news of the Balakot disaster was communicated to him. He at once hurried to Patna where he was elected the chief successor of the Sayyid. (*Cf.* 'Abd al-Rahim: *al-Durar al-Manshūr fī Tarājim-i-Ahl-i-Ṣādiqpūr,* Ilāhābād, A.H. 1345, pp. 114-16: and W.W. Hunter: *Our Indian Musalmans,* London, 1871, p. 49 f.)

2 Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī was born at Mullatola of Jawnpur in U.P., in A.H. 1215, A.D. 1800 (*cf.* Mawlānā 'Abd al-Bāṭin: *Sīrat-i-Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī Jawnpūrī,* Ilāhābād, A.H. 1368, p. 9; and Intāj al-Dīn Aḥmad: *Nasab Namā-i-Karāmatiyah* (Bengali), B.S. 1356, p. 1. James Wise says, "excited by the preachings of Sayyid Ahmad, he followed that remarkable man to Calcutta, [*circa.* A.D. 1820], became his disciple and accompanied him to Meccah. On return he proved himself one of the most valuable deputies of Sayyid Ahmad" (*cf.* James Wise: *Eastern Bengal,* p. 27). In A.H. 1250, A.D. 1835, he came to

(*Continued on page* liii)

maintained that complete adherence to the prescriptions of the school was necessary on the part of every Muslim of "our age". The third view was expressed by Mawlawī 'Abd al-Jabbār, another disciple of Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd[1], who professed himself to be a follower of the *Ḥanafī* school of law but still adhered to the principle of giving preference to the Prophetic tradition. These views were brought out in three publications by the three persons concerned, which are briefly examined below :—

(*i*) Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī called his work *'Amal bi'l-Ḥadīth*, *i.e.*, following Prophetic tradition or *ittibā'-i-sunnah*. It is a small but important pamphlet, written in chaste Persian and published sometimes before A.D. 1837.[2] In the opening section the author says that so many questions were put to him regarding the propriety of "following Prophetic tradition" (*ittībā'-i-aḥādīth*) in preference to "following the prescriptions of the school" (*ittibā'-i-fiqh*) and *vice versa*, that he decided to publish this pamphlet for general information[3].

(*Continued from page* lii)
Calcutta, a second time, with the intention of devoting the rest of his life in preaching pure doctrines of Islām to the Muslims of Eastern India. This visit to Bengal continued for 18 years without break (*cf.* Mawlana 'Abd al-Bāṭin : *Sīrat-i-Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī Jawnpūrī, op. cit.*, pp. 44-45 and 88). In course of this visit, he toured almost all the districts of Bengal including Dacca, Faridpur, Bakarganj and Mymensingh, the zone of *Farā'iḍī* influence. In A.D. 1853, he paid a short visit to Jawnpur but soon came back to Bengal. He took a second wife at Noakhali district and died at Rangpur on the 2nd Rabī' II, A.H. 1290, A.D. 1873 (*cf. ibid.*, pp. 97-98).

1 This Malawī 'Abd al-Jabbār was a resident of Calcutta. He was the son of Jamāl Allāh son of Muḥammad Ashraf (*cf.* Mawlawī 'Abd al Jabbār : *Jawab-i-Quwwat-al-Īmān, circa.* A.D. 1837, p. 2). He is to be identified with one referred to by Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī as belonging to *nayā madhhab* or the new school (*cf.* Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī : *Quwwat al-Īmān, op. cit.*, section "Ruqqa'āt-i-'Abd al-Jabbār", p. 323 f.). He must not, therefore, be confused with the *Fara'iḍī Khalifah* of the same name.

2 The textual evidence indicates that this work was published earlier than Mawlana Karamat 'Alī's *Quwwat al-Īman* (see *infra.*).

3 Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī : *Amal bi 'l-Ḥadith*, p. 1.

In this work the author says that the main purpose of Islam is to make the people to follow the injunctions of the *Qur'ān* and the Prophetic tradition. Hence, if a prescription of the school is found to contradict any of the injunctions contained in these two sources, the prescription must be given up, and the injunction be followed. For, in this context there is no scope for *taqlīd* or imitation of the school[1]. He further opines that if in such a case a *Ḥanafī* (*i. e.*, a follower of school) gives up the prescription of his school in order to follow the Prophetic tradition, he proves himself to be a good *Ḥanafī*. For, the main object in following the prescriptions of the school is to follow the *Qur'ān* and the Prophetic tradition[2]. In any case, the main object is to follow the truth and not the opinions of a person. In his opinion *taqlīd* or imitation of a school is permissible only for those who are unable to decide the right course of action by means of their own knowledge[3]. But it is not permissible for a person who can decide for himself by his knowledge of the *Qur'ān* and Prophetic tradition[4].

(*ii*) Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī called his work *Quwwat al-īmān*, *i.e.*, the strength of the faith. It is a book of 344 pages written in Urdu and published in A. H. 1253/A. D. 1837. Its main theme being the vindication of the finality of the school, it proved to be a refutatior of Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī's *'Amal bi'l-Ḥadīth*.

In this work, the author maintains that among the two great division of the Muslims, the *Shī'ah* school has gone astray and the *Sunnī* school is on the right path. The *Sunnī* school, however, consists of only four recognised schools, namely, *Ḥanafī*, *Shāfi'ī*, *Mālikī* and *Ḥanbalī*. The finality of these four schools has been decided by the consensus of the opinion of the Muslim community.

1 Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī : *'Amal bi 'l-Ḥadīth*, pp. 3 f., 12, 15 and 16.

2 *Ibid.*, pp. 3-11.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 10.

4 *Ibid.*

It is, therefore, necessary that every Muslim follows the prescriptions of one of them[1].

Ijtihād or fresh inquiry, according to Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī, is theoretically possible[2]. The establishment of the four schools, however, has rendered fresh investigation unnecessary; for, there is no need of a fifth school[3]. Even if any jurist invents a fifth school, it will conform to one of these four[4]. Hence, such an attempt would be superfluous.

It is necessary to follow one of the *imāms*, *i.e.*, enunciators of the four schools; for, their paths are, in reality, the paths of the companions of the Prophet. In fact, they elicited the prescriptions from the *Qur'ān* and the Prophetic tradition and did not invent anything of their own[5]. Even if the prescriptions of the school appears to contradict any injunction of the Prophetic tradition, the prescriptions must be followed; for, the necessity of the imitation (*taqlīd*) of the *imāms*, has been established by the consensus of the opinion of the Muslim community (*ijmā'*). Hence, "giving up the *taqlīd* of the imām would amount to going out of the fold of Muslim community (*sawād al-a'ẓam*)[6].

In one place, he declares that he still adhered to the old school of law (*madhhab*) to which he previously belonged, *i.e.*, *Ḥanafī* school of law. "I remained firm", he says, "on my old school and did not give up *taqlīd* on account of the propaganda of the ignorant"[7].

(*iii*) Mawlawī 'Abd al-Jabbār calls his work *Taqwiyat al-Muslimīn fī ittibā'-ī-Sunnat-i-Sayyid al-Mursalīn*, *i.e.*, strengthening the Muslims in following the tradition of the Prophet. It is

1 Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī : *Quwwat al-Īmān.* Calcutta, A.H. 1253, p. 28.
2 *Ibid.*, p. 192 f.
3 *Ibid.*, pp. 39 and 82.
4 *Ibid.*, p. 82.
5 *Ibid.*, p. 62.
6 *Ibid.*, pp. 154 and 166.
7 *Ibid.*, p. 292.

written in Urdu and was published in A. H. 1256/A.D. 1840. This work, as the title itself suggests, is a re-assertion of the necessity of giving preference to the Prophetic tradition. Hence, it is a refutation of Mawlāna Karāmat 'Alī's *Quwwat al-Imān.*

It may be noted that earlier to this publication Mawlawī 'Abd al-Jabbār published a pamphlet entitled *Jawāb-i-Quwwat al-Imān, i.e.*, a reply to *Quwwat al-Imān,* in which he considered several important points advanced by Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī, and refuted them one by one[1].

The subject of the *Taqwiyat al-Muslimīn* is more or less the same as that of Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī's *'Amal bi'l-Ḥadīth.* Mawlawī Wilayat 'Alī's work was a statement of policy, in which the leader of the *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah* movement reiterated that he would pursue the same policy which was bequeathed by the founders of the movement. Mawlawī 'Abd al-Jabbār's work was a justification of that policy, in which he attempted to show that the policy so bequeathed was no other than the policy of Shāh Walī Allāh and Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz[2]. Thus, Mawlawī 'Abd al-Jabbār's work proved to be complementary to Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī's *'Amal bi'l-Ḥadīth.*

In *Taqwiyat al-Muslimīn,* 'Abd al-Jabbār says that it is clear from the evidence of the Qur'an[3] that "our salvation lies in following the Prophetic tradition to the fullest extent, even if it goes against the customs and usages". Hence, if a follower of the school leaves away the prescription of the *Imām* in order to follow the tradition of the Prophet, he earns the pleasure of the Prophet as well as that of the *imām* ; for, the *imāms* themselves were of the opinion that if any of their views contradicts Prophetic tradition, the latter must be followed[4].

1 Copy preserved in the Asiatic Society of Pakistan, Dacca.

2 Mawlawī 'Abd al-Jabbār : *Taqwiyat al-Muslimīn fi Ittibā'-i-Sunnat-i-Sayyid al-Mursalīn.* Calcutta, A.H. 1256, p. 26 f.

3 He cites the following verse of the *Qur'ān* : (Say O Muḥammad)! "If you really love Allāh, follow me, Allāh will love you", *Qur'ān,* 3:31.

4 *Taqwiyat al-Muslimīn, op. cit.,* p. 23.

Taqlīd or imitation of the schools, in his opinion, cannot be a general rule. It may only be allowed as a matter of necessity for the ignorant. He further says that Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz and Shāh Ismā'īl Shahīd regarded *taqlīd* as useless and akin to polytheism. It is, therefore, necessary to ascertain that the prescriptions of the school are in conformity with the *Qur'ān* and the Prophetic tradition[1].

Mawlawī 'Abd al-Jabbār claims himself to be a Ḥanafī. He, however, believes that the truth is not a monopoly of any one school but pervades the schools of all religious scholars (*mujtahids*). Hence, he regards all religious scholars as his leaders. He, therefore, claims himself to be completely impartial in his judgment of their opinions[2]. In spite of this independence of thought, he thinks, he is a rightly guided *Ḥanafī.*

Split between Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī and Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī: The above analysis shows that from A.D. 1831 onwards, Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī, the leader of *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah*, pursued the policy of giving preference to Prophetic tradition, and even encouraged the followers of the *Ḥanafī* school, who formed the bulk of the Muslim population of Indo-Pakistan subcontinent, to pay increasing attention to the tradition of the Prophet. Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī on the other hand attached greater importance to the prescriptions of the school. As corollaries of these two standpoints, Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī, supported the principle of *ijtihād* or fresh inquiry and Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī supported the principle of *taqlīd.* Thus the publication of *'Amal bi'l-Ḥadīth* and *Quwwat al-Īmān* about the year A. D. 1837, brought the two opposing tendencies represented by the two leading followers of Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd, to a head, and the split between them became complete.

Thereafter, Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī called himself *Ḥanafī* and compaigned for the *Ḥanafī* school of law. Later on he came to be

1 *Cf. Taqwiyat al-Muslimīn, op. cit.*, p. 29.

2 *Cf.* Mawlawī 'Abd al-Jabbār : *Jawāb-i-Quwwat al-Īmān, circa.*, A.D. 1837, p. 2.

known as "Ta'aiyunī" and the reform movement led by him as the "Ta'aiyunī movement", especially in Eastern Bengal[1].

Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī maintained a neutral position, and is not known to have identified himself with any particular school of law. After his death (A.D. 1852), his followers came to be known as "Wahhābīs" or "Indian Wahhābīs", especially in the government circle, because of their involvement in a series of State Trials, officially known as *Wahhābī* Trials, from A.D. 1863 to 1870[2]. They, however, called themselves "Muḥammadī"[3] an abbreviation of *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah.* But in order to distinguish them from the *Ahl-i-Ḥadīth*, who came out of the main body of the movement at a later date and who also called themselves "Muḥammadī", the followers of Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī have been referred throughout this study as the Patna school, as Patna was the centre of their activity.

Although Mawlawī 'Abd al-Jabbār identified himself with the *Ḥanafī* school of law, yet his approach to the Prophetic tradition was, as we have seen above, fundamentally the same as that of Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī. Naturally, therefore, he remained within the main body of the movement, *i.e.*, the Patna school.

Split between Patna School and Ahl-i-Ḥadīth : In the foregoing analysis of Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī's '*Amal bi'l-Ḥadīth* and Mawlawī 'Abd al-Jabbār's *Taqwiyat al-Muslimīn*, we have noticed that two distinct tendencies were gradually gaining ground among the promoters of the Prophetic tradition, one inclining to the schools of law and the other betraying reluctance to affiliate itself to any school of law. But, although Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī did not identify himself to any school of law, yet he recognised the validity of the schools. Likewise, Mawlawī 'Abd al-Jabbār firmly attached

1 *Cf.* James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, pp. 6-7.

2 *Cf.* W.W. Hunter : *Our Indian Musalmans,* London, A.D. 1871, p. 84 ; and Muin-ud-Dīn Ahmad Khan : *Selections from Bengal Government Records on Wahhābi Trials*, 1863-1870, Dacca, 1961, p. 1.

3 *Cf.* Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī : *Quwwat-al-Imān, op. cit.*, p. 135 ff.

himself to Prophetic tradition though he also affiliated himself to the *Ḥanafi* school. So long as Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī was alive (d. 1852), this accommodative spirit saved the two trends from a collision.

In course of time the two trends assumed extreme position as one group inclined more and more to *Ḥanafi* school of law and the other repudiated the propriety of imitation or *taqlīd* of the school of law. Hence, no longer the split between the two groups could be avoided.

Materials at our disposal do not permit us to fix an exact date to this split. The first important pamphlet namely *Thabūt-i-Ḥaqq al-Ḥaqīq* (*i.e.*, establishment of the truth), which indicated a complete breach between the two groups, was published in A. H. 1281/A.D. 1864. This work was written by Sayyīd Nadhīr Ḥusayn[1], who led the repudiators of the schools of law.

This new school which came out of the Patna school, called itself "Muḥammadī" and "Ahl-i-Ḥadīth" (*i.e.*, the partisans of the tradition of the Prophet). Later on they came to be widely known as *Ahl-i-Ḥadīth* and *Rāfi' Yadayn*, the last name because of their practice of frequently raising hands in course of prayer. Their opponents often called them *lā madhhabī* (*i.e.*, one who does not belong to any of the recognised *sunnī* schools of law). Although the term "lā madhhab" reflected their actual position, it was applied to them by way of reproach. In the present study they are referred to as *Ahl-i-Ḥadīth*.

Relations of the Farā'iḍī with Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammidiyah and its Successor Movements : The influence of *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah* affected Bengal in four phases. The first phase began with the

1 Sayyid Nadhīr Ḥusayn was born at Balthawa in the Munghyr district of Bihar, in A.D. 1805. About A.D. 1842, he established a religious seminary at Delhi and taught Prophetic tradition there till his death in A.D. 1902 (*cf.* Muhammad Ishaque : *India's Contribution to the Study of Ḥadīth Literature* (being a doctoral thesis approved by the University of Dacca in 1947). Dacca University Publication, 1955, pp. 184-85.

visit of Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd and Shāh Ismā'īl Shahīd to Calcutta in A.D. 1820, and lasted till 1831. The second phase was through Patna school, the third phase through *Ta'aiyunī* and the fourth phase through *Ahl-i-Ḥadīth*. The protagonists of the above phases of *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah*, in course of propagation of their doctrines in Eastern Bengal, came into contact with the *Farā'iḍīs* and developed friendly or hostile relations with them. As the *Farā'iḍīs* had a different type of relation with them, it is desirable that their relations with each of these groups be considered separately.

(*i*) *Relations of the Farā'iḍīs with Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah*

(A.D. 1820 to 1831)

The *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah* movement was started at Delhi about A.D. 1818. In A.D. 1820, the founders of the movement paid a visit to Calcutta, where, according to Hunter, "the masses flocked around" Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd in such numbers that he was unable even to go through the formal ceremony of initiation *i.e.*, by separately clasping the hand of every person desirous of becoming his disciple. "Unfolding his turban, therefore, he declared that all who touched any part of its ample length became his disciple"[1]. Next year, on his way to Makkah he visited Calcutta again and stayed there for a period of three months[2]. According to tradition current in East Pakistan, many people came thither to meet him from different districts of Bengal.

It may be noted that while coming to Calcutta for the first time in A.D. 1820, Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd halted at Patna, where, according to Hunter, the number of his disciples had "so swelled" as to "require a regular system of government". Hence, he appointed Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī of Patna his deputy or *khalifah* and left the charge of the Patna disciples to his care[3] before he

1 W.W. Hunter : *Our Indian Musalmans, op. cit.*, p., 13.

2 *Cf. History of the Freedom Movement*, Karachi, 1957, p. 563.

3 W.W. Hunter : *Our Indian Musalmans, op. cit.*, p. 13.

left for Calcutta. Evidently, the *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah* evolved a definite policy with regard to the organisation of the Patna disciples. Materials at our disposal, however, do not suggest that a similar Bengal policy was evolved at this early stage either by Sayyid Aḥmad S̲h̲ahīd or by his Bengali followers[1].

The amazing success and popularity gained by *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah* at the cosmopolitan city of Calcutta, however, was bound to overflow in course of time. Little wonder, therefore, that about A.D. 1827, it took the shape of a mass movement in the rural society of West Bengal at the hands of Titu Mīr. This first upsurge of *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah* movement in Bengal was short-lived and remained confined to the districts of 24 Parganahs and Nadiya. As such it formed somewhat a counterpart of the *Farā'iḍī* movement in West Bengal.

Titu Mīr's Programme of Religious Reform: It is generally agreed that Titu Mīr preached reformed doctrines of Sayyid Aḥmad S̲h̲ahīd. It is, however, not known for certain whether the Sayyid invested him with *k̲h̲ilāfat* or commissioned him to propagate the reforms of *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah* though the local tradition of a legendary nature would have us believe that he was appointed a *K̲h̲alīfah* by the Sayyid[2]. All we know is that Titu Mīr became a disciple of Sayyid Aḥmad S̲h̲ahīd at Makkah about A.D. 1822[3], and on his return to his native district of 24 Parganahs about A.D. 1827, he began to preach pure doctrines of Islām. For this commendable work, he received a stipend from a member of the

1 It may be noted that some writers believe that during his stay in Bengal Sayyid Aḥmad S̲h̲ahīd established a well-knit organisation there ; but source of information has not been mentioned by any one of them (see *Māsik Muḥammadi*, Bengali monthly, Dacca, Māgh, B.S. 1360, p. 260).

2 See 'Abd al-G̲h̲afūr Ṣiddīqī, "Titu Mīr" in *Māsik Muḥammadī, op. cit.*, B.S. 1360, p. 260 f.

3 W.W. Hunter : *Our Indian Musalmans, op. cit.*, p. 45.

Royal Family of Delhi, who had become his patron since A.D. 1821[1].

Biharilal Sarkar, the Bengali biographer of Titu Mīr, says that one Mawlawī Muḥammad Ḥusayn of the district of Pabna was appointed a *khalīfah* by Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd. In his *sanad* of *khilāfat*, which was deciphered by Biharilal Sarkar, the Sayyid impressed upon Muḥammad Ḥusayn the necessity of enforcing two fundamental items of programme, *viz.*, (i) the attributes of God must not be applied to human beings, and (ii) no rite or ceremony (excepting those which are approved by the *Qur'ān* and Prophetic tradition) be observed[2]. According to Biharilal Sarkar, Titu Mīr enforced above pattern of reforms in West Bengal[3].

According to the same authority, the above-mentioned principles were further elaborated in the *sanad.* In the first place, it was pointed out that the angel, spirit, demon, *Pīr*, teacher, saint or prophet has no power of their own to bestow benefit or to inflict injury on anybody; none of them, therefore, be propitiated or worshipped. Secondly, no (un-Islamic) rite or ceremony be observed on the occasions of marriage and death; hence, decoration of tomb, raising of mausoleum, preparation of *ta'ziah* (*i.e.*, the effigy of Imām Ḥusayn's tomb) on the occasion of Muḥarram, and various *fātiḥahs* (*i.e.*, rites for the remembrance of dead relatives), be purged[4]. According to Biharilal Sarkar, the above programme was also the characteristic of Titu Mīr's movement[5].

In addition to the above mentioned items, Titu Mīr directed his followers to grow beards and to wear *dhuti* (the national dress

1 Mallick : *British Policy*, p. 77, *cf.* Bengal Judicial Criminal Consultations, 3 April, 1831, Letter from the Magistrate of Baraset to the Commissioner of the Circuit, 14 Division, dated 24 November, 1831, para, 4 (India Office Library).

2 Biharilāl Sarkar : *Titu Mīr* (Bengali), Calcutta, B.S. 1304, p. 11 ; see also W.W. Hunter : *Indian Musalmans*, p. 54 f.

3 Biharilāl Sarkār ; *Titu Mīr*, p. 11.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 11.

5 *Ibid.*

of the Hindus which was commonly used by the Muslims of Bengal until recently) without passing one end between the legs[1]. Furthermore, he is said to have asked his followers to keep away from the unreformed Muslims and permitted interdining only amongst his followers themselves[2].

If this last characteristic of Titu Mīr's programme of reform, namely imposition of restriction on interdining, as reported by Colvin, is true, it must have led his followers to form into a distinct and exclusive social group resembling the Hindu caste, and as a consequence, it may have restricted the number of his followers[3]. Being the promoter of an Islamic revivalism, Titu Mīr is not, however, expected to follow such a course. There have been many *ṣūfīs* and puritan *'ulamā'* (theologians) who would not accept food or present offered by a person who earned his livelihood by foul means, such as through cheating, usury or bribery. But they did not restrain people of such doubtful integrity, from dining with them or even from becoming their guests. Even now-a-days instances of this nature are not lacking in the Muslim society of Bengal. This kind of practice is also found amongst the *Farā'iḍī khalīfahs.* Being a stranger to the institutions of Islām, Colvin was probably unable to differentiate between a fanatic restriction to interdining and a pious attachment to "lawful food and earnings" (*ḥalāl rūzī*).

It will be seen later that the reform programme enforced by Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh was almost similar to the one described above[4]. This similarity of programme led Revenshaw, the *Wahhābī* prosecuter (*circa.* A.D. 1863-1870), to identify the *Farā'iḍī* movement

1 This practice was also characteristic of the *Farā'iḍīs* (see *infra.*, chapter vi).

2 *Cf. Colvin to Barwell.* 8 March, 1832, para. 6, (Board's Collection No. 54222). p. 43 : quoted by Dr. Mallick in his *British Policy, op. cit.*, p. 77.

3 This positon appears to have been accepted by Dr. Mallick, see his *British Policy, op. cit.*, p. 77, For our views which are slightly different, see below.

4 See *infra.*, chapter iii, p. 7 ff.

with those of Titu Mīr and Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd and also Dr. Mallick to call the movement of Titu Mīr as *Farā'iḍī.*[1] Materials at our disposal, however, suggest that these notions are far from the truth[2].

In the first place, we have just seen that Titu Mīr's programme of religious reform was an extension of *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah* to rural Bengal. Hence, it was in the tradition of Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd and Shāh Walī Allāh. The inspiration of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh, on the other hand, was drawn from Arabia and had no connection with the religious development in Delhi.

Secondly, there is no evidence of any contact between Ḥājī Shar'īat Allāh and Titu Mīr or between the two movements led by them. Tradition current in the family of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh, as will be seen later, indicates that each of them entertained friendly attitude to the other, and that, Dudu Miyān (son of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh) paid a visit to Titu Mīr while on his way to Makkah, when the former was only 12 years old (*circa.*, A.D. 1830-1831)[3]. There is a likelihood that Dudu Miyān was influenced by the socio-economic aspect of Titu Mīr's movement. But, when that influence began to exert on the *Farā'iḍī* movement (from *circa*, A.D. 1840), Titu Mīr's movement had already died out.

Thirdly, it has been pointed out by Revenshaw that Titu Mīr and Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh were the followers of *Ḥanafī* school of law[4]. This is quite natural; for, in the first place, almost all Muslims of rural Bengal have always been *Ḥanafī;* secondly, it will be seen that the Ḥājī's teacher and guide Ṭāhir Sombal was a Ḥanafī[5], and thirdly, many of the leading disciples of Sayyid

1 *Cf.* Dr Mallick : *British Policy, op. cit.*, pp. 90-91.

2 For our point of view see "The Struggle of Titu Mir : a re-examination", *J.A.S.P.*, vol. iv, 1959, pp. 113-33 in which we have also utilised indigenous sources.

3 See *infra.*, chapter iv, p. 24.

4 *Cf. Selection from the Records of the Government of Bengal, vol. XLII : Trial of Ahmadullah.* p. 127.

5 See *infra.*, chapter iii, p. 4 ff.

Aḥmad Shahīd, such as Mawlawī 'Abd al-Ḥayy and Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī were *Ḥanafīs*. Even the Sayyid himself had good deal of inclination towards the *Ḥanafī* school of law[1]. This similarity, therefore, does not prove their identity.

Fourthly, we have seen earlier that one of the real criterion of difference between the *Farā'iḍī* and *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah* lay in their attitude to the legality of holding congregational prayers of *Jum'ah* and *'Īd* in Bengal under the British rule[2]. As Titu Mīr and his followers unlike the *Farā'iḍīs* held fast to these prayers, which is also pointed out by Dr. Mallick[3], we find the real criterion of their difference on this doctrinal point. It will also be seen later that this particular point proved to be the distinguishing mark between the *Farā'iḍīs* and the followers of Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī[4].

A concrete example of their difference is found in the life and career of Munshī Faiḍ al-Dīn Mukhtār, originally a resident of the district of Jessore, who became a follower of Titu Mīr at Calcutta. In his later life he immigrated to Faridpur district and married in an eminent *Farā'iḍī* family. During the life time of Dudu Miyān, he acted as the former's legal attorney, and after Dudu Miyān's death, he was appointed one of the guardians of Dudu Miyān's sons. He, however, did not become a convert to the *Farā'iḍī* doctrines but remained a faithful follower of Titu Mīr till his death.[5]

Nevertheless, there were certain striking similarities between the life and career of Titu Mīr and Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh, which may not be overlooked. In the first place, Titu Mīr was born of an obscure family[6] as was the case of Ḥājī Sharīat Allāh[7]. Both of

1 See *History of the Freedom Movement*, Karachi, 1957 ; pp. 569-70.
2 See *supra*.
3 See Mallick : *British Policy, op. cit.*, p. 91, foot note 1.
4 See *infra.*, chapter vi, p. 67 ff. and chapter vii, p. 98 ff.
5 See *infra.*, Appendix "G", p. 139.
6 *Cf.* W.W. Hunter : *Our Indian Musalmans, op. cit.*, p. 45.
7 See *infra.*, chapter iii, p. 1 ff.

them, therefore, came from the lower strata of the Muslim society of Bengal. Secondly, almost all their supporters came from the masses of the people. Thirdly, both the movements spread most extensively in those places where the Hindu *zamīndārs* held sway over the Muslim peasantry.

Moreover, in course of his propagation of the puritan doctrines of Sayyid Aḥmad S͟hahīd, Titu Mīr came into conflict with the Hindu *zamīndars* and European indigo planters of 24 Parganahs in A.D. 1830. For, the growing sense of equality and unity of his followers, alarmed the Hindu *zamīndārs*, especially as his movement showed every symptom of going against their vested interest on account of its popularity among the Muslim peasantry. On the other hand, a section of the conservative Muslims detested his puritanism which assailed their time-honoured customs and prejudices; but they themselves being unable to check the growth of the new movement lodged complaints to the Hindu *zamīndārs* against Titu Mīr and his followers. This gave the *zamīndārs* the opportunity they sought, and Ram Narayan (*zamīndār of* Taragonia), Gaur Prasad Chowdhury (*zamīndār* of Nagarpur), and Krishna Dev Ray (*zamīndār* of Purwa or Punrah) took concerted step to crush the movement in the bud. They imposed a "beard-tax" at the Rate of Rs. 2½ per head on the followers of Titu Mīr. This heavy tax was actually realised at Purwa, but the agents of the *zamīndārs* met with resistance at Safdarpur, where the peasantry challenged the right of the *zamīndārs* to levy such illegal cesses which went against the teachings of Islām. In retaliation, Krishna Dev Ray attacked the Muslim settlement of Safdarpur in A.D. 1830, with a large band of clubmen (*lāṭhiyāl*), looted the village and burned down several houses including a mosque. The peasantry tried their best to secure justice against these oppressions and extortions from the Police and the legal courts, but all in vain. At last, in A.D. 1831, the peasantry rose in a body, entered the market-place of Purwa, *i.e.*, in the village of Krishna Dev Ray, slaughtered a cow and with its blood and carcases defiled a Hindu temple. In this

process, Titu Mīr's movement turned itself into a socio-economic struggle of the Muslim peasantry against the Hindu *zamīndārs* in which the European indigo planters combined their forces with their natural allies, the *zamīndārs.* The struggle that followed soon flared up into large scale affrays, in which Titu Mīr won a clear victory over both the *zamīndārs* and indigo planters. But his enemies being in close touch with the English officers succeeded in convincing them that Titu Mīr was a rebel against the British government. Thereupon two Police expeditions were sent to apprehend Titu Mīr and his party, which were beaten back. Finally, Titu Mīr and his followers were crushed by a military expedition from Calcutta on the 19th November, 1831[1].

It will be seen later that the *Farā'iḍī* movement also followed a similar pattern. In A.D. 1831, it came into conflict with the conservative Muslim society and through it with the Hindu *zamīndārs* of Dacca. From A.D. 1838 onwards it came into violent conflict with the Hindu *zamīndārs* and European indigo planters on account of its policy of upholding the rights of the Muslim peasantry. This eventually gave it a socio-economic bias, and it became most popular in this socio-economic phase[2].

This similarity in the growth and development of the two movements indicates that the reform movements of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh and Titu Mīr were called into being by similar social, economic and religious crises, which the Muslims of Bengal, especially the lower classes, were facing as a result of political and administrative changes wrought by the British during their rule of over half a century. Thus, it may be fairly concluded that the identification of the *Farā'iḍī* movement with that of Titu Mīr is not justified.

(ii) *Relations between the Farā'iḍī and the Patna School*: The annihilation of Titu Mīr and his followers in A.D. 1831

1 For details see "The struggle of Titu Mīr : a re-examination", *J.A.S.P.*, vol. iv, 1959, pp, 113-33.

2 See *infra.*, chapters iii and iv.

did not, however, remove the cause of discontent among the peasantry. The spirit of reformation and of revolt against oppression, which he stood for, undoubtedly survived. In his violent death, he became even more known than in his life time, and his martyrdom became symbollic of his ideals and a lasting source of inspiration to the down-trodden peasantry of Bengal in their subsequent struggle against the *zamīndārs* and indigo planters. The thread of Sayyid Aḥmad S͟hahīd's influence in rural Bengal, which was cut off by Titu Mīr's tragic death, was soon taken up by an infinitely superior successor of him, Mawlawī 'Ināyat 'Alī of Patna.

Considering the death of Sayyid Aḥmad S͟hahīd at Balakot and of Titu Mīr at Narkelbaria in A.D. 1831, Hunter observes that the end of the reformers appeared to have come. "On the Punjab frontier their forces had been scattered and their leader slain. The insurrection in Lower Bengal had met with a similar fate". But the *k͟halīfahs* whom the Sayyid appointed at Patna (*i.e.*, Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Ali and Mawlawī 'Ināyat 'Alī) "came to the rescue"[1]. Their "missionary zeal" and "immense pecuniary resource" raised the sacred banner again and again from the dust[2]. When the news of Balakot disaster reached Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī (while he was in South India), he hurried to Patna where he was elected the chief leader of *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah.* On his own part, he chose a few picked persons, made them his *k͟halīfah* and sent them to different directions. It was in this process that Mawlawī 'Ināyat 'Alī came to Bengal[3].

The exact date of Mawlawī 'Ināyat 'Alī's arrival in Bengal is not known. According to his family records, it took place in

1 W.W. Hunter ; *Our Indian Musalmans,* London 1871, p. 47.

2 *Ibid.,* pp. 49-50.

3 *Cf.* 'Ābd al-Raḥīm : *al Durrar al-Mant͟hūr fī Tarajim-i-Ahl-i-Ṣadiqpūr,* Ilāhābād, A.D. 1345, pp. 133-34. It may be noted that the author of the above work belongs to the family of Mawlawī Wilayat 'Alī and Mawlawī 'Inayat 'Alī, which is popularly known as the "Ṣadiqpūr Family". The author claims that he has compiled this work on the basis of family records. We accept this source in so far as corroboration is found in other sources.

A.D. 1831 or 1832[1]. On his arrival, he made a survey of the whole field in consultation with the Bengali followers of Sayyid Aḥmad S͟hahīd and soon realised that the Muslims of rural Bengal, who were plunged in ignorance and superstition, needed his greater attention than those of the towns and cities. He, therefore, made for the interior of the province and toured one village after another, preaching without rest the pure doctrines of Islām[2]. About A.D. 1840, he even took the bold step of removing his headquarters to Hakimpur, a village in the district of Jessore, where he lived with his family for 3 or 4 years[3].

It is also evident from the Government Records relating to five State Trials, *viz.*, (a) Ambala Trial of 1864, (b) Patna Trial of 1865, (c) Maldah Trial of 1870, (d) Rajmahal Trial of 1870, and (e) The Great *Wahhābī* Trials of 1870-1871, that the endeavours of Mawlawī 'Ināyat 'Alī and his agents, from A.D. 1830 to 1870, had far-reaching effects on the Muslims of Bengal[4]. The mode of the Sayyid's preachings through passionate appeal to the mass of the people, not only to reform their religious life but also for active participation in a political venture, had introduced a new dynamic force in Muslim society, namely a religio-political consciousness of the masses. Mawlawī 'Ināyat 'Alī's strategy in Bengal was no exception. By uniting the masses into a well-knit organisation and by preaching the doctrine of *jihād* or holy war

1 *Ibid.* The author categorically says that Mawlawī 'Ināyat 'Alī stayed for 7 years in Bengal during this first visit and thereafter proceeded to the principality of Kaghan where we find him in A.D. 1838. Thus, we may calculate that he came to Bengal in A.D. 1831 or in the beginning of 1832.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 133.

3 *Ibid.*, also this is widely known in East Pakistan.

4 See W.W. Hunter : *Our Indian Musalmans, op. cit.*, p 84 f. ; Muin-ud-Din Aḥmad K͟hān : *Selections from Bengal Government Records on Wahhabi Trials 1863-1870,* Dacca, 1961, p. 1 ff ; *Pamphlet on India, the Great Wahhabi Case being a full report of the proceedings in the matters of Ameer Khan and Has͟hmadād K͟hān.* Calcutta, 1870 ; and Lewis A. Mendes : *Report of the Proceedings in the matters of Ameer K͟hān and Has͟hmadad K͟hān,* Calcutta, 1871.

against the usurpers of Muslim dominion, he and his followers succeeded in bringing about a religious revolution in the Muslim society of rural Bengal. Thus, Mawlawī 'Ināyat 'Alī's arrival in Bengal about A.D. 1832, not only revitalised Titu Mīr's effort but also brought the central wave of *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah* into the remotest villages of the province.

Zone of its Influence and Contact with the Farā'iḍī : The establishment of the headquarters of Mawlawī 'Ināyat 'Alī at Jessore, bordering on the *Farā'iḍī* district of Faridpur, must have brought the followers of the Patna school and the *Farā'iḍīs* into close contact. Hunter says that Mawlawī Yaḥyā 'Alī, an eminent leader of the Patna school, had "amalgamated the *Farā'iḍīs* of Lower Bengal with the *Wahhābīs* of Northern India" about A.D. 1843. He further states that the *Farā'iḍīs* and the followers of the Patna school (*i.e.*, the so-called *Wahhābīs*) were "found side by side alike among the dead on the field of battle and in the dock of the Courts of Justice" from about A.D. 1858 to 1871[1]. We have, however, seen that the *Farā'iḍīs* and the *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah* had doctrinal differences, and Patna school being a continuation of the latter, amalgamation of the two movements is beside the question, nor has it any historical basis as will be seen in the following chapters. Circumstantial evidences, however, suggest that common disapproval of the British occupation of this subcontinent, had fostered cordial relations amongst the followers of the two movements.

In the first place tradition current among the *Farā'iḍīs* claims that the followers of Dudu Miyān contributed generously to the *jihād* fund opened by him for the help of the fighters of the Patna school at the North-West Frontier Camp. Secondly, in one document relating to the Maldah Trial of A.D. 1870, mention has been made of two *Farā'iḍī* leaders visiting the town of Maldah which was undoubtedly a settlement of the followers of the Patna school. They stayed there for a few days and preached their

1 W.W. Hunter : *Our Indian Musalmans, op., cit.*, p. 100.

doctrines in large gatherings without any let or hindrance[1]. If they visited a *Ta'aiyuni* settlement, such peaceful propagation of *Farā'iḍī* doctrines would not have been possible[2]. Thirdly, although the *Farā'iḍis* dominated the eastern portion of the district of Jessore, and the followers of the Patna school in the western portion, there is no evidence of their ever coming into conflict; rather, this direct contact between the two movements appears to have checked the progress of the *Farā'iḍī* movement to the west and that of the Patna school to the east.

On the whole, evidences gathered from government documents suggest that the northern and western districts of Bengal, namely Dinajpur, Maldah, Rajshahi, Murshidabad, Nadiya, Burdwan, Jessore, Calcutta and 24 Parganahs, had come under the strong influence of the Patna school. The movement was apparently strongest in those tracts which were traversed by the rivers Ganges and Bhagirathi[3]. Three doctrinal works, dealing with the life and character of Sayyid Aḥmad S̲h̲ahīd and S̲h̲āh Ismā'īl S̲h̲ahīd in Bengali and Urdu, published from Dacca about A.D. 1863[4], strongly suggest that the doctrine of *jihād* or holy war, preached by them, had tremendous appeal in Eastern Bengal, and that the influence of *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah* had swept over this region. But curiosuly enough the influence of Patna school made no noticeable headway there.

A close examination of the abstract of these works (supplied by these Records[5]), reveals that there existed a nascent conflict

1 See our *Selections from Bengal Government Records, op. cit.*, pp. 300-301.

2 See *infra.*, chapter vii for the intensity of *Ta'aiyunī* opposition to the *Farā'iḍī* movement.

3 *Cf. Selections from Bengal Government Records, op. cit.*, p. 8.

4 These works are (i) *Tusseer Moradiya* (probably *taysīr* or *tafsīr al-murādiyah, i.e.*, an exposition of the ideals), published in Urdu language ; (ii) a collection of *Fatāwā* or legal decisions on the necessity of waging *jihād* or holy war, compiled and published by Ḥajī Badr al-Dīn in Bengali verse ; and (iii) *Tutwa* (probably *tatva i.e.*, subtle principles), jointly composed by Ḥajī Jan Raḥman and Ḥajī Badr al-Dīn in Bengali verse (See *ibid.*, pp. 278 and 301).

5 *Ibid.*

between the beliefs of the credulous masses and that of the elite with regard to the character of leadership provided by the Sayyid. Being prone to believe in miracles, the masses regarded the Sayyid as the *Mahdi* (*i.e.*, the last spiritual guide much awaited for, especially by the *Shi'ahs*), who had miraculously disappeared rather than died (at the battle of Balakot in A.D. 1831), but only to reappear on a more opportune time in order to rescue the Muslims from the humiliation of the English rule through *jihād*. On the other hand, special care has been taken in these works to counteract this superstition. They describe graphically the circumstances under which Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd and Shāh Ismā'īl Shahīd were killed by the Sikhs, bewail the then sorrowful plight of the Muslims and express the hope that their condition would improve by the grace of God. *Jihād* was deemed obligatory on every Muslim, and besides *jihād* (*i.e.*, holy war) and *hijrat* (*i.e.*, emigration from a country ruled by the infidels to the countries ruled by the Muslims), no other alternative was recognised. Even they assert that whosoever rejects *jihād* and *hijrat* was an enemy of God.

The boldness of the elite in accepting the fact of the Sayyid's death, may have been the result of the discovery of a Bengali disciple of the Sayyid, who, according to Hunter, travelled 1800 miles with one thousand colleagues to inquire about the Sayyid's death on the spot. They found three "goat-skins stuffed with grass", which were made to resemble the appearance of human beings with the help of some pieces of wood and hair. These stuffed figures, preserved by one Mullah Qādir in a mountain cave, were represented as the Sayyid and his companions. This was, it is said, made the ground for many miraculous stories around the Balakot disaster by the followeis of the Patna school[1]. The reluctance of the elite of Eastern Bengal to accept the miraculous stories in this respect may, therefore, have been one of the main reasons for the retarded progress of the influence of Patna school in that region.

1 *Cf.* W.W. Hunter : *Our Indian Musalmāns, op. cit.*, pp. 48-49.

A second reason for the retardation of its influence in Eastern Bengal may be found in the reluctance of the Patna school to come into conflict with Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī of Jawnpur, who had concentrated his efforts for reform largely in Eastern Bengal[1]. A third reason might have lain in the good relations which existed between the Patna school and the *Farā'iḍis*. Besides, extensive *Farā'iḍī* influence in the area lying north to south from Mymensingh to Bakarganj, had also considerably blocked the expansion of the Patna school to Eastern Bengal and Assam[2], as the progress of the *Farā'idī* movement to the western Jessore was checked by the powerful influence of the Patna school there.

Relations between the Farā'iḍī and the Ta'aiyunī: The *Ta'aiyunī* movement was an off-shoot of the *Ṭarīqah-i-Muhammadiyah*, which was led by Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī. The term "ta'aiyunī" is derived from the Arabic word "ta'aiyun", which means "to identify". Hence, the term "ta'aiyunī" implies a person who identifies himself with a particular trend. We have seen earlier that the split between Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī and the main body of the *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah* led by Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī, was effected by the former's insistence on the principle of *taqlīd* or imitation of the schools of law (*madhhab*); in this context, the term "ta'aiyunī", therefore, implied a person who definitely identified himself with a particular school of law or *madhhab*. The fact that Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī rebuked the followers of Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī and the later *Ahl-i-Ḥadīth* as *lā-madhhabī*[3] (*i.e.*, one who does not belong to any school or *madhhab*), corroborates the above interpretation. Hence, James Wise's contention that the term "ta'aiyunī" means "establishing or manifesting"[4], does not fit into the context.

1 See *infra*.

2 See *infra*., chapter ix.

3 *Cf*. Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī : *Quwwat al-Īmān, op. cit.*, pp. 197, 203 and 208 and *Ḥujjat-i-Qāṭi'*, Calcutta, A.H. 1344, pp. 94-97.

4 James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, p. 7.

The *Ta'aiyunī* movement was also known as *Rāhī*[1], a term derived from the Persian "rah" which means "a path". The term, as we have seen above, was used by Sayyid Aḥmad S͟hahīd to mean *ṭarīqah* (which is its Arabic equivalent) in *Sirāṭ al-Mustaqīm*. Probably, Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī indicated by the term "Rāhī", the two paths, *i,e.*, *rah-i-nabuwwat* and *rah-i-wilāyat*, described by the Sayyid[2].

Like other reformists, Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī also opposed superstitious beliefs and un-Islamic innovations. In one of his pamphlets, he states that he found the Muslims of Eastern India plunged so much in superstitious beliefs, customs and ceremonies that he became apprehensive of Divine retribution. According to him, this was one of the reasons why he dedicated his life to the propagation of true doctrines of Islam amongst the Muslims of Bengal[3]. He mentions numerous un-Islamic innovations which were practised in different parts of Bengal. He especially condemned music, dance, raising of *ta'ziah* (*i.e.*, the effigy of Ḥusayn's tomb) on the occasion of *Muḥarram*, the rite of *'urs* (*i.e.*, death anniversary of the *Pīrs*) and various types of *fātiḥah* in remembrance of the dead relatives. He, however, approved *fātiḥah* provided it was observed in a modified form[4].

Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī came to Bengal in A.D. 1835 and spent the rest of his life (till A.D. 1873) mostly in Bengal. We have seen earlier that the Patna school was co-existing peacefully with the *Farā'iḍīs* of Bengal, and by his acceptance of the *taqlīd* or imitation of the *Hanafī* school of law, Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī might have come even nearer to the *Farā'iḍī* point of view. But, contrary to this expectation, he denounced the *Farā'iḍīs* for having

1 James Wise, *Eastern Bengal, p.* 7.

2 See *supra.*

3 Mawlāwī Karāmat 'Alī : *Mukās͟hifāt-i-Raḥmāt.*, Calcutta, A.H. 1344, p. 12 f.

4 *Ibid.*.

suspended the congregational prayers of *Jum'ah* and *'Id*, and the followers of the Patna school for their hesitation to identify with one of the four recognised *sunnī* schools of law. He called the former the *khārijīs* of Bengal[1] and the latter *lā-madhhab*[2], and identified both of them with the *Wahhābīs* of Arabia[3].

The vehement attack of Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī on the followers of Patna school and the *Farā'iḍīs*, however, far from uniting them into a common front against him, set them even further apart from one another. For, Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī inaugurated an era of debate amongst the Muslims of Bengal in the field of religion, and succeeded in organising an intense type of propaganda which laid more emphasis on religious differences among different groups rather than on the similarities and agreement.

The *Farā'idīs*, being followers of the *Hanafī* school of law, believed in the finality of the schools and the propriety of *taqlīd*[4]. On these points, they had, therefore, fundamental differences with the Patna school, which on principle rejected *taqlīd* and campaigned for the revivification of *ijtihād*, and called upon the people to follow Prophetic tradition in preference to the prescription of the schools of law[5]. Moreover, the followers of the Patna school differed with the *Farā'iḍīs* in holding congregational prayers of *Jum'ah* and *'Id*, which in the opinion of the latter were not permissible in Bengal under the British regime[6].

Mawlāna Karāmat 'Alī stream-lined his attack on the *Farā'iḍīs* by denouncing their practice of suspending the prayers of *Jum'ah* and *'Id*[7]. In this the Patna school agreed with him. But he hit

1 *Cf.* Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī : *Ḥujjat-i-Qāṭi'*, *op. cit.*, pp. 94-97.
2 *Ibid.*
3 *Cf.* Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī : *Qawl al-Thābit*, Calcutta, A.H. 1344, p. 4.
4 See *supra.*
5 See *supra.*
6 See *infra.*, chapter vi, p. 72 ff.
7 See *infra.*, chapter vii.

the followers of Patna school mainly for their deviation from the *taqlīd* of one of the four recognised schools of law[1]. On this latter point, the *Farā'iḍīs* approved of his arguments. Thus, there ensued a triangular fight in the field of Islamic revivalism of Bengal, which to some of the followers of the traditional customs, appeared like breaking of woeful time rather than reformation[2].

The rigidity with which all parties argued their case, soon gave rise to intense bitterness. When the *Ahl-i-Hadīth* severed its connection with the Patna school about the middle of the nineteenth century and extended their movement to Bengal, they also posed themselves to be a rival group against the rest. The natural result was the increase of tension. Thus, as Faḍl Ḥusayn says, "the controversy did not remain confined to a few controversialists or to their polemics", but debate (*Munāzirah*) led to altercation (*Munāqasha*) and altercation led to mutual friction (*Mujādilah*) and so on and so forth[3].

Little wonder, therefore, that during the later half of the nineteenth century the religious scene of Bengal was dominated by a type of public debate between rival groups, popularly known as *bahāth*. Such *baḥāth* were held several times between the *Farā'iḍīs* and the *Ta'aiyunīs*, which will be considered in a separate chapter[4].

Relations between the Farā'iḍīs and Ahl-i-Hadīth : The *Ahl-i-Hadīth* or partisans of Prophetic tradition, were those who repudiated the propriety of *taqlīd* or imitation of any particular

1 *Cf.* Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī : *Quwwat al-Īmān, op. cit.*, pp. 135 ff., 145 ff., 149 ff., 154 and 166.

2 *Cf.* Mawlawī 'Abd al-'Alī : *Ṣaḥīfat al-A'māl wa Mir'at al-Aḥwāl* (written *circa.*, A.D. 1885), p. 40 ff.

3 *Cf.* Faḍl Ḥusayn : *al-Ḥayat Ba'd al-Mamāt*, p. 308, quoted by Dr. Muhammad Abdul Bari in his unpublished Ph. D. thesis, "A comprative study of the Early Wahhābī Doctrines and Contemporary Reform Movements in Indian Islam" (Oxford University, 1953), p. 158.

4 See *infra.*, chapter vii.

school exclusively. They assert the need for following the traditions of the Prophet from original sources through *ijtihād* or fresh investigation regarding the rules provided by them. In government records and gazetteers, they are generally called *Rāfi' Yadayn* because of their peculiarity of frequently raising hands to the ears in course of changing posture in prayer. They are found scattered all over Indo-Pakistan subcontinent.

During the later half of the nineteenth century their traces are found in the *Farā'iḍī* districts of Faridpur and Bakarganj. But, probably, due to the intellectual character of its doctrines, the *Ahl-i-Hadīth* never succeeded in assuming the form of a mass movement in rural Bengal. Moreover, although the *Farā'iḍīs* are followers of the *Hanafī* school of law, they do not oppose the idea of following Prophetic tradition. Hence, the *Ahl-i-Hadith* does not appear to have come into direct conflict with the *Farā'idī*. Only in one *Farā'idī fatwā* or legal decision, we come across a reference to the *Ahl-i-Haḍīth*, in which the *Farā'iḍī* theologians detested their practice of holding the congregational prayers of *Jum'ah* and *'Īd* in the villages of Bengal[1]. On the whole, the *Farā'iḍīs and Ahl-Hadīth* appear to have been largely indifferent to each other.

SECTION B

Local Practices

In the late nineteenth century James Wise classified the Muslims of Bengal into four religious groups, *viz*., *Sābiqī*, *Farā'iḍī*, *Ta'aiyunī* and *Ahl-i-Hadīth* (or *Rāfi' Yadayn*), and states that the traits of the old society survived in the practices of the *Sābiqī* alone[2]. The term "sābiqī" is derived from the Arabic word "sābiq" the nominative case of *sabaqa*, which means "gone before". A *Sābiqī* is, therefore, one who follows the customs of the ancestors or those who have gone before. According to Wise, the *Ṣābiqī*

1 See *infra*., chapter vi, p. 72 ff.

2 *Cf*. James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, pp. 6-7.

group consisted of the majority of the landlords and "with few exceptions, the descendants of the old *sunnī* families"[1]. He characterises them as "the conservatives" representing "the debased Hinduised religion peculiar to Muhammadan India". He further says that the *Sābiqī* social order was the oldest and the most corrupt which until late represented the dominant State religion. "By a study of [its ?] heresies and superstitions", he says, "we acquire a truer estimate" of the Muhammadan faith in Bengal, when the revival first dawned upon the people[2]. In A.D. 1818, Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh considered the Muslim society of Bengal so corrupt and un-Islamic that he made *tawbah* or penetence, the first principle of his reform programme[3]. About A.D. 1835, Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī of Jawnpur, found the Muslim masses of Eastern India so much plunged in superstitious beliefs and practices that he became apprehensive of Divine retribution[4]. Even as late as A.H. 1289/A.D. 1872, he witnessed much more "pauperism, lethargy and negligence" in the religious behaviour of the Muslims of Southern Bengal, than in any other Muslim land[5].

The *Farā'iḍī*, Patna school, *Ta'aiyunī* and *Ahl-i-Hadīth* movements, which represent the Islamic revivalism of the nineteenth century in this subcontinent, aimed at reforming the old socio-religious order by purging it of un-Islamic elements. It is, therefore, worthwhile to examine those popular institutions which were attached to the old order, and which the revivalists desired to abolish. The *Sābiqī* or the old order, however, represented a composite culture in which various strains of local and foreign traditions were fused. The foreign traditions were brought to Bengal by Muslim immigrants from the West (*i.e.*, Central Asia,

1 *Cf.* James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, pp. 6-7 it may also be noted that the bulk of the Muslim population of Eastern Bengal were *sunnī* as Wise himself says, "the Muhammadan population of Eastern Bengal has always been *Sunni*" (*ibid.*, p.21).

2 *Ibid.*, p. 7.

3 See *infra.*, chapter vi, p. 61.

4 *Cf.* Mawlawī Karamat 'Alī : *Mukāshifāt-i-Raḥmat*, p. 3.

5 *Ibid.*

Arabia, Persia and northern India), or developed locally by them. The local customs consisted of various mystic cults, customs and ceremonies which apparently represented a survival of pre-Islamic practices or blending of Muslim influence with that of the Hindu and Buddhist neighbours. The former were imported through Northern India and both in form and procedure of observation conformed to the North Indian pattern. But the latter, as can be well imagined, were peculiar to Bengal or Eastern India. The main features of this "popular religion" may be considered under following heads :

(*i*) Pirism.

(*ii*) Mystic Cults, Peculiar to Bengal.

(*iii*) Cults, Rites and Ceremonies introduced by the Immigrants.

(*iv*) *Shī'ah* influence on the *Sunnī* Society of Bengal.

(*v*) Survival of Local Customs.

(*i*) *Pirism*: The Persian word "pīr" means "old", and as such the phrase "pīr mard" is understood in Persian and Urdu languages to mean "an old man". The term "pīr" is, however, especially used in Indo-Pakistan subcontinent to denote "a mystic guide" *i.e.*, a ṣūfī (or mystic) who initiates disciple in mystic orders. Hence, it is generally understood in contradistinction to the teım "murīd", which means "a desirous person", *i.e.*, a disciple. In Bengali language, the term "pīr" is exclusively used in this mystic sense and has no other meaning than "the mystic guide". The term "pīr" as used in Bengal, is, therefore, equivalent to the mystic terms "Shaykh", and "Ustādh" used in different parts of the Muslim world[1].

In the above sense, pirism can be equated with sufism. A distinction has to be made, however, between the connotation of the terms "pīr" and "ṣūfī", especially as they are used in Bengal.

1 *Cf. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. x, p. 40.

For, a *ṣūfī* is a person who practises the science of mysticism (*'ilm-i-taṣawwuf*) ; but a *pīr* is a perṣon who, besides being a *ṣūfī*, initiates disciple into mystic orders. In popular conversation. this distinction is almost exclusively maintained in Bengal. All *pīrs* are, therefore, *ṣūfīs*, but all *ṣūfīs* may not be *pīrs*. The significance of this distinction lies in the emphasis on the science of mysticism or *taṣawwuf* in sufism and on the person of the *pīr* in pirism. Hence, in the early tradition of sufism, we observe that successors of a mystic are chosen on the basis of merit alone[1] ; whereas, pirism in Bengal and elsewhere in this subcontinent tends to be hereditary.

According to the analysis of K. M. Ashraf, a class of Muslims in the pre-Mughal society of Northern India adhered to the original ideals of Islam and took also to asceticism and other-wordly activities ; and while they "persisted in living according to their ideals, they created a peculiar awe and solemn reverence for themselves among the followers of Islam, for whom amidst their materialistic surroundings, this lure for the primitive had a special fascination". He further adds that India was already familiar with the Hindu ideal of *guru,* which found an appropriate expression in the corresponding belief in a *Pīr or Shaykh* in Muslim society. As a matter of fact, "if an ascetic had managed to scorn the world during his life time, his sons and successors were reaping a fruitful crop of worldly gains after his death[2]." Likewise, in his recent study of the pre-Mughal Muslim society of Bengal, Dr. Abdul Karīm observes that pirism did not originate in Bengal, but the long settlement of the Muslims in this land side by side with the local people (many of whom were converted and taken to the fold of Islām), made this concept deeply rooted in the society. "The converts found in the *Pīr* a resemblance of the Tantric *gurus* and in the tombs and *dargāhs* (shrines) that of

1 See numerous cases in Farīd al-Dīn 'Aṭṭār's *Tadhkirat al-Awliyā.*

2 Kunwar Muḥammad Ashraf : *Life and Conditions of the People of Hindustan* (1200-1550 A.D.), Calcutta, (*J.A.S.B.* Letters, vol. 1, 1935, No. 2) 1935, p. 187.

Chaitya or *Stupa*" (worshipped by the Buddhists)[1]. A mass of biographical data of the Muslim mystics of Bengal collected by Dr. Karim, suggest that the earliest *ṣufīs* were known as *S͟hāh*[2] or *S͟hayk͟h*[3]. This usage of the mystics appears to have gradually changed into later-day pirism.

Dr. Karim considers pirism as the most important element of the popular force of Islam in Bengal[4]. A close examination of the available sources, such as inscriptions hagiological literature, *puthis* etc., shows that superhuman powers were ascribed to the *ṣūfīs* and *pīrs,* such as giving relief to the poor, destitutes and patients, being present at several places at a time, giving life to the dead, killing any body at their will, and foretelling the future[5]. The people considered the *dargāh* (tomb or shrine) of the *Pīr* as a place of pilgrimage. They made offerings to the *Pīrs* or to their departed soul, built tombs and illuminated them. The rulers made shrines and other establishments attached to them[6].

In nineteenth century in Bengal James Wise for the first time noted two types of mystics, namely *bā-s͟hara'* (*i.e.,* those whose practices conform to *s͟hari'ah* or the Islamic system of law and morality) and *be-s͟hara'* (*i.e.,* those whose practices do not conform to the *s͟harī'ah*[7]). The former type of mystics were also called *sālik* and the latter *majzūb*[8].

He rightly points out that the Arabic term *sālik* literally means a traveller, and in the mystic terminology, "a traveller in the path of mysticism who concientiously observes the religious duties

1 Dr. Abdul Karim : *Social History of the Muslims in Bengal* down to A.D. 1538, Asiatic Society of Pakistan, Dacca, 1959, p. 209.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 88 ff.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 90 ff.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 209.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 134 ff.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 209.

7 *Cf.* James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, p. 53.

8 *Ibid.*

prescribes by Islamic law as well". The term *majzūb* means "one who has lost consciousness"; hence in mystic terminology, it indicates a person who, being overcome by his passion of love for God, has become unmindful to the worldly etiquette[1].

It is generally believed that the desires of a *majzūb* are, in reality, the desires of God expressed through him. In this sense, he is compared with a corpse, resigned completely to the will of God. James Wise says that they "follow their own appetites and passions, eating and drinking whatever they fancy and leading disreputable and scandalous lives". They wander about naked or nearly naked and live on begging or charity and "are universally credited with supernatural powers". On the other hand, the *sāliks* are, according to Wise, "usually married men of settled habit", who initiate disciples into their orders. Consequently, the *sāliks* were by far the most respected in Bengal[2].

The popular type of pirism, especially the miraculous concept of the *Pīrs,* and the unusual reverence attached to their persons, came under sharp criticism of Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd[3]. Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh even advocated the abolition of the terms "pīr" and "murīd" because of this un-Islamic bias. Instead, he introduced the terms "ustād" (*i.e., ustādh*), which means "teacher" and "shāgird" (*i.e.,* student)[4]. He also opposed the general practice of initiating the ignorant masses into mystic order[5]. Likewise, Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī made scathing criticism of various un-Islamic practices of the *Pīrzādahs* (hereditary successors of the *pīrs*) and fake *Pīrs (ja'lī pīrs)*[6].

(ii) *Mystic Cults* (*Peculiar to Bengal*) : The Buddhist population of Bengal practised worshipping of *Chaityas* or the *Stupas*

1 *Cf.* James Wise : *Eastern Bengal,* pp. 53-54.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 53.

3 See *supra.*

4 See *infra.*, chapter vi, p. 83.

5 See *infra.*, chapter iii, p. 83 and chapter vii, p. 95.

6 *Cf.* Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī : *Mukāshifāt-i-Raḥmat, op. cit.*, p. 13 f.

and adored them with flowers and burning incense. The Hindus believed in *Avatār* or incarnation of the deity in human body. These ideas found a suitable parallel in the pīrs in the eyes of the local converts[1]. The result was the rise of various local cults around pirism, such as the cults of *Pānch Pīr, Mānik Pīr, Ghora Pīr, Kumbhira Pīr,* and *Madāri Pīr*[2]. Besides, in the cult of *Satya Pīr* of the Muslims and *Satya Nārāyan* of the Hindus[3], the two communities even stood shoulder to shoulder. As a matter of fact, Muslim relics have been found on excavation of *Satya Bhitā*, which stands on the famous Buddhist monastery at Paharpur in the district of Rajshahi[4]. It is interesting to note that these local cults were propagated exclusively through Bengali literature, pointing unmistakeably to their local origin.

(iii) *Other Cults, Rites and Ceremonies:* A number of mystic cults, such as *Khawāj Khizr, Zindah Ghāzī, Pīr Badar and Shaykh Sādhu* became very popular among the Muslims of Bengal[5]. The following example will illustrate the point. The festival of *Berā*, dedicated to *Khawāj Khizr* was widely observed in the eighteenth and the nineteenth century by high and low "on the last Thursday of the Bengali month Bhādra". According to James Wise, it coincided with the breaking of the rains and was celebrated by the Muslims as well as by the Hindu boatmen and fishermen. The *Berā* was "made of paper and ornamented with tinsel"; it had a prow "resembling a female face with the crest and breast of a peacock, in imitation of the figure-head on the bow of the *Mor-Pankhī* (*Mayur-Pankhī*) pleasure boat". "The effigy placed on a raft of plantain stem, is set afloat at sunset, and with its flickering light gives a picturesque aspect to the dart and flooded stream[6]".

1 *Cf.* Dr. Abdul Karim : *Social History of the Muslims in Bengal, op. cit.*, pp. 163-64.

2 *Ibid.*, pp. 167-70.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 165 ff.

4 *Cf.* K.N. Dikshit : *Memoirs of the Archaelogical Survey of India,* No. 56, Delhi, 1938, p. 80.

5 *Cf.* James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, pp. 12-20.

6 Ibid., p. 12.

Ghulām Ḥusayn informs us that Nawāb Sirāj al-Dawlah celebrated it at Murshidabad[1]. In A.D. 1821, it was gorgeously celebrated by the Nawāb of Murshidabad[2].

The Muslim immigrants introduced a type of birth day celebration of the Prophet called variously as *Mawlūd Sharīf*, *Mīlād Sharīf* or *Mīlād al-Nabī*. The procedure of its observation consists of three parts, *viz.*, (a) the narration of events immediately preceding the birth of the Prophet, (b) the description of the occasion of his birth, called *tawallud sharīf*, and (c) exposition of his teachings. The second part or the *tawallud sharīf*, is accompanied by a chorus in Arabic, Persian or Urdu. Recently, Bengali chorus has also been introduced. In accordance with traditional procedure, it is necessary to stand up when the occasion of the Prophet's birth is described, and sing the chorus loudly while standing. For, it is generally believed that the soul of the Prophet visits the function at this stage[3].

Likewise, the rites of *fātiḥah* and *'urs* for the remembrance of the dead, were introduced by the immigrants. According to the supporters of these rites, the term "fātiḥah" is derived from the title of the first chapter of the *Qur'ān*, *i.e.*, *sūrah fātiḥah*. This is because the recitation or repetition of *sūrah fātiḥah* forms the most prominent part in the procedure of its observation[4]. The general procedure of its observation also consists of three parts, *viz.*, (a) recitation or repetition of the first chapter of the *Qur'ān* followed by recitation or repetition of some other portions of the *Qur'ān*, called *suwar*, (b) entertainment of the guests generally by a

1 *Cf. Siyar al-Muta'akhkharīn* (English translation by M. Raymond, edited by John Briggs), vol. ii. p. 533.

2 Brajendranāth Bandopādhāy ed, : *Sambād Patre Sekāler Kathā*, Calcutta, B. S. 1339, vol. i, p. 172.

3 *Mīlād* in this form is still practised widely in Bengal ; for further description see *infra*.

4 *Cf.* MS. *Fatwā* on the legality of *fatiḥah* written in Persian by Mawlawī Faiḍ Aḥmad, of the village Chunati, district Chittagong (collected by the present writer from his descendants).

square meal, for which one or more fowls or even a goat is slaughtered, and (c) prayer to God for bestowing the rewards of the recitation and of the feast to the soul of the person or persons in whose remembrance the *fātiḥah* is held, which is called īsāl-i-thawāb[1].

It may be noted that the rite of *fātiḥah* is observed in remembrance of dead relatives, whereas the rite of *'urs* is observed as the death anniversary of the pirs. In every detail, it is a *fātiḥah*, but it generally attracts a large gathering. In its popular form, *fātiḥah* used to be observed on the third, fourth, tenth, twentieth and fortieth days following the death of a person, and thereafter observed annually. Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī mentions six types of *fātiḥah* including the one just mentioned[2]. The *'urs,* on the other hand, is observed only once a year. On this occasion, the disciples of the deceased *Pīr* congregate at the *dargāh*, *Khānqah* or at the residence of his successors and pass a few days in mystic exercise and pious contemplation. They usually bring their provisions with them including animals for sacrifice and cash presents for sons and successors of the *Pir*. The fact that the proceedings of *milād*, *fātiḥah*, and *'urs* are conducted mainly in Arabic, Persian and Urdu languages down to the present day points to their non-Bengali origin. Although these customs are not met with in the tradition of the Prophet or that of his immediate successors, they were given a peculiarly Islamic orientation by their enunciators, and became universally popular in the Muslim world during the medieval times.

(iv) The Shī'ah Influence on the Sunnī Society: The *Shi'ah* influence was introduced into the Muslim society of Bengal about the sixteenth century A.D., by the Mughal rulers of Delhi, who had imported it from Persia.

1 Cf. MS. Fatwa on the legality of fatiḥah written in Persian by Mawlawī Faiḍ A mad, of the village Chunati, district Chittagong (collected by the present writer from his descendants).

2 Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī, *Ḥaqq al-Yaqīn*, Calcutta, A.H. 1344, p. 39.

From that time many high officials were drawn from the Shi'ah sect, especially from Murshid Quli Khān's time all the Nawābs of Bengal were *Shi'ah,* who patronised *Shi'ah* customs and ceremonies[1]. Although the religious doctrines of *Shi'ah* sect did not make noticeable headway among the Muslims of Bengal, the emotional contents of the *kārbālā* legend succeeded in exerting great influence on the life and thought of the *Sunni* masses. This is demonstrated in the production of many fine pieces of *puthi* literature commemorating the martyrdom of the Prophet's grandson, Ḥusayn, at Kārbalā, growth of a separate branch of Bengali song bewailing the death of Ḥusayn, called *zārī gān*, and a pompous observance of *Muḥarram* throughout the country, especially in the towns and cities and in their neighbourhood.

The observance of *Muḥarram* may be characterised as a street drama in which the sad incident of Kārbalā is reproduced. It is held on the tenth day of Muḥarram, the first month of the Arabian calendar, to commemorate the martyrdom of Ḥusayn. The process begins a few days earlier, with intricate rehearsal and preparation of a *ta'ziah* or the model of bier on which an effigy of Ḥusayn's dead body is placed. On the night of the tenth day, or the *manzil kā din,* the oldest and the most venerable man sleeps in the building where the *ta'ziah* is kept, and a *pari* (*i.e.,* a fairy) reveals to him "the exact hour that the *Tazia* should be removed, and as that hour approaches it is placed on a platform or *Gaddi Nil Bahr* and crowds of Muhammadans assemble and struggle for the honourable post of carrier." It is then carried on in a dramatic procession to a distance of about four miles (in the case of Dacca city) and cast away in a tank[2].

James Wise says that the preparation of *ta'ziah* was (until late years), carried on "in every Muhammadan village, and each strove to make a more laudy model than its neighbours". Garcin de Tassy and Wise considered it as closely resembling the *Durgā Pujā*

1 See James Wise : *Eastern Bengal,* p. 6.
2 *Ibid.* p. 9.

and *Ratha Yātrā* of the Hindus[1]. "In former days", Wise further adds, "one *Nil Bahr* built on a cenotaph in honour of Bibi Fatimah (the daughter of the Prophet), and for many generations a paper *Tazia*, called *Turbat Haidari*, has been deposited in it during Muharram"[2]. But at present, in the villages the *ta'ziahs* are not taken out in procession.

(v) *Survival of Local Customs:* It is well-known that many Muslim villagers, especially the women, made offerings to Sitalā Devi, the Hindu goddess of small-pox, down to the early decades of the present century[3]. Another spirit, which was feared by Hindus as well as by the Muslims, was *Mātri* or *Umm-i-Ṣibyān.* It was believed to cause convulsion to a child up to the age of 18 months, after which it was powerless to inflict any injury. For the cure of such convulsions an *Ojhā* or wizard was summoned, and should recovery ensue, he was credited with effecting it[4].

James Wise says that after the birth of a child many strange rites were performed. "A bonfire (alawa) is kept smouldering at the door of *chhatti-ghar* (which he also calls *asauchi ghar* or poluted room), for six days in the hot, for twenty-one in the cold season, and an oil lamp, placed within the room, must never be permitted to go out, an attendant being always on the watch to trim it, as darkness favoured the entrance of evil spirit". Wise further adds that the Hindu mother was confined to this room for six days, and the Muslim mother generally for ten[5]. Many such other customs were observed on the occasions of marriage, circumcision, menstruation and death, especially by the women,

1 *Cf.* James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, p. 9.

2 *Ibid.*

3 Compare with S͟hāh Ismā'īl S͟hahīd's criticism of the practice of worshipping the goddess of small-pox in *Taqwiyat al-Īmān*, translated into English : *Support of Faith* (by Mir Has͟hmat 'Alī), Lahore, not dated, p. 50.

4 *Cf.* James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, p. 50 f.

5 *Ibid.*,

which were abolished by Ḥājī S͟harī'at Allāh from the *Farā'iḍī* society[1].

The Reaction of the Sābiqī to Revivalism: It may be noted that the *Taqwiyat al-Īmān* of S͟hāh Ismā'īl S͟hahīd was the first attempt of the revivalists to enumerate the un-Islamic beliefs and practices which were in vogue in this subcontinent. It was published about A.D. 1820. In A.D. 1829, one Mawlawī Muḥammad 'Alī of Madras questioned the propriety of the reform doctrines of S͟hāh Ismā'īl S͟hahīd and Sayyid Aḥmad S͟hahīd and advanced 18 questions against the *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah* movement[2]. A similar refutation was published by a learned theologian of Chittagong (at a later date) entitled *S͟harḥ al-Ṣudūr fī Daf'i al-S͟hurūr az Radd-i-Taqwiyat al-Īmān,*[3] which means "a clearance of doubts from the hearts (of men) in defence against evils and in refutation of *Taqwiyat al-Īmān*". Thus, the old society of Indo-Pakistan subcontinent reacted sharply to the puritan revivalism of the nineteenth century and in this respect Bengal was not lagging behind.

But the theologians who supported the customs of the *Sābiqī* society were in a disadvantageous position. For, it was hardly possible to vindicate many of the old cults, customs and ceremonies on the basis of the *Qur'ān* and the tradition of the Prophet and his immediate successors. Besides, many of the traditional customs directly or indirectly infringed upon the strict monotheism of Islām, which were disliked by the learned *'ulamā* of the old society. The skilful preachings of the reformists to the masses were also creating doubts regarding the validity of many old

1 See *infra.*, chapters iii and vi.

2 Copy preserved in the Asiatic Society of Pakistan, which also includes answers given by Mawlawī Irtiḍā 'Alī (a follower of *Ṭarīqah-i-Muḥammadiyah*) to those questions. See also *J.A.S.B.*, vol. i, A.D. 1832, pp. 479-99; and M. Garcin de Tassy: *Histoire de la Litterature Hindouie et Hindoustanie*, Paris, 1870-71, vol. iii, p. 115.

3 The MS. of the work consisting of about 200 folios in persian is preserved by Mawlāwī Faiyaḍ al-Raḥmān K͟hān, village Chunati, district Chittagong.

institutions. For instance, in an *istiftā* (a formal way of seeking legal opinion from the jurists) of the late nineteenth century, it was asked whether the *fātiḥah* as practised by the Muslims in general was to be regarded lawful or not, on account of its certain resemblances with the Hindu *pujā*. The theologians (who supported the old custom) wrote a *fatwā* (*i.e.*, legal opinion) to allay the fears[1]. Gradually, however, the supporters of the old customs took their stand on four important points, *viz.*, (i) finality of the schools of law and *taqlīd*, (ii) *fātiḥah*, (iii) *'urs* and (iv) *m lād*, which occupied most important place in the *sābiqī* social system.

The reformists themselves were divided on the question of *taqlīd*, and the argument of Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī in favour of *taqlīd* and the finality of the schools created a good deal of enthusiasm among the theologians[2]. The *Sābiqī* theologians generally argued on the same line though some of them took the extreme view that the *sharī'ah* (the legal system of Islam) is a technical term which means "these four schools", *i.e.*, *Ḥanafī*, *Shāfi'ī*, *Mālikī*, and *Ḥanbalī*[3]. Hence those who do not follow the prescriptions of one of the four schools, are not following the *sharī'ah* in the proper sense. Moreover, Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī argued that it was necessary *i.e.*, *lāzim*, to follow the prescriptions of the schools, whereas the supporters of the old society even did not hesitate to apply the term obligatory, *i.e.*, *farīḍah*, as being the nature of this duty[4]. Addressing the reformists, Mawlawī

1 MS. *Fatwa* of Mawlawī Faiḍ Aḥmad, *op. cit.*, (in the possession of the present writer).

2 See *supra*.

3 *Cf.* Mawlawī Muhammad 'Abd al-Qādir : *Fatḥ al-Mubīn fī Radd-i-Zafar al-Mubīn*, Calcutta, *circa.*, A.H. 1300, pp. 1 and 90. The main theme of the book, as the author puts it, *Ḥaṣr-i-Madhhab-i-Arba'* *i.e.*, inclusiveness of the four schools.

4 *Cf.* Mawlawī Muḥammad 'Abd al-Qādir : *Fatḥ al-Mubīn fī Radd-i-Zafar al-Mubīn*, *op. cit.*, pp. 2-3 and 195-96. It may be noted that the word "lāzim" connotes the meaning of "being necessary" in a general sense, and the term "far ḍah" connotes an "obligatory duty" expressly enjoined by the *Qur'ān*, the rejection of which will turn a Muslim into an infidel.

'Abd al-Qādir says, "Oh the followers of *lā-madhhab!* May you die of your anger! Do not throw slender on others. You are, in fact, corrupters of the world and not reformers".[1]

With regard to *fātiḥah, 'urs* and *mīlād*, the *Sābiqī* theologians generally admitted that these institutions were not in practice during the time of the Prophet and that of his immediate successors. They were, therefore, innovations. But they argued that all innovations were not necessarily evil; for, there can be two kinds of innovations, *e.g.*, good innovations *(bid'at-i-ḥasnah)* and sinful innovations *(bid'at-i-saiyi'ah)*, and they regarded the above institutions as "good innovations".

We have seen above that both in form and procedure of observation, *fātiḥah* and *'urs* were the same. In his *Fatwā* on *fātiḥah*, Mawlawī Faiḍ Aḥmad states that although in the composite form it has not been found in the tradition of the Prophet and that of his immediate successors, yet the parts thereof were practised separately in their times. He, therefore, justifies the propriety of the rite of *fātiḥah* on this basis[2].

Mīlād as a birth anniversary of the Prophet is regarded as a commendable function by all. It provides a good avenue for the propagation of the teachings of Islam, and can be held on any day of the year. It is, in fact, observed by the reformists as well as by the *Sābiqī* with an equal zeal. The controversy, however, arises on the question of "standing up" or *qiyām*, at the second part of its procedure when the occasion of the Prophet's birth or *tawallud sharīf* is described. The Sābiqi theologians hold that considering the visit of the Prophet's soul, *qiyām* is not only desirable *(mustaḥab)* but near obligatory *(wājib)*[3]. The reformists, on the other hand, maintain that *qiyām* is superstitious and polytheistic accretion; for, according to them "reverence to the unseen"

1 *Ibid,*, pp. 1 and 194.

2 MS. *Fatwa*, in the possession of the present writer.

3 MS. *Fatwa* on *mīlad sharīf* of Mawlawī Sayf Allāh Khān of the village Chunati, district Chittagong (collected by the present writer).

of the type which *qiyām* involves is due to God alone. They, therefore, regard the practice of *qiyām* as unlawful[1].

From amongst the reformists, the *Ta'aiyūni* leader Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī advocated moderation on the question of *fātiḥah* and *mīlad*. In *Haqq al-Yaqīn*, he maintained that in so far as *fātiḥah* represents recitation from the *Qur'ān*, entertainment of the guests and prayer to God for the weal of the dead, it is lawful[2]. Although he does not appear to have expressed his opinions clearly on the point of *qiyām*, yet there is unmistakeable evidence that he approved of it. For, in a book on *mīlād*, which contains the procedure of *qiyām*, we find Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī associating himself as the reviser and approver of the work[3]. Nevertheless, he strongly detested *'urs* in his *Mukāshifāt-i-Raḥmat* and says, "the rite of *'urs* was found neither in the tradition of the Prophet nor in that of the two generations that followed him nor even is there any basis for it in the writings of the four *imāms*" (*i.e.*, the founders of the four *sunnī* schools of law). It is, therefore, decidedly a sinful innovation. He, however, admits that some of the ancestors practised it. But it was "by way of error or negligence", which should not be a reason for its continuation[4].

As pointed out earlier, *fātiḥah, 'urs* and *mīlād* were imported by the immigrants from the west and occupied important places in the old socio-religious system. Although the history of their origin is obscure and their procedure is not found in the tradition of the early Muslims, yet in course of time they received a peculiar Islamic orientation and their celebration was permeated by pious motive. Moreover, through long practice they also came to be

1 *Cf.* Ḥāfiẓ 'Abd al-Shakūr : *I'lan Wājib al-Idh'an, Milād wa Qiyam par*, Calcutta, 2nd. ed., A.H. 1295, pp. 5-6.

2 *Cf.* Mawlawī Karāmat 'Ali : *Ḥaqq al-Yaqīn*, Calcutta, *circa.*, A. H. 1344, p. 39.

3 *Iḥya' al-Qulūb fī Mawlūd al-Maḥbūb* (preserved in the Asiatic Society of Pakistan, Dacca).

4 *Cf.* Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī : *Mukāshifāt-i-Raḥmat*, Calcutta, *circa.* A.H. 1344, p. 12.

regarded as prototypes of Islamic festivity. The *Sābiqī 'ulamā'*, therefore, succeeded considerably in justifying them simply by exhortation and by exploiting the people's sentiment[1]. The case of the local traditions, such as *Muḥarram, Bherā* (or Berā), the mystic cults etc., on the other hand, was on a different footing. For, their proximity and resemblance to local *pujās* (worship of gods and goddesses) and local customs rendered their defence on Islamic grounds almost impossible. Moreover, in them, there were many details which pointed to the survival of pre-Islamic practices. The obscurity of the origin of *fātiḥah, 'urs* and *mīlād*, thus, provided even a greater opportunity for their defence. This is, therefore, the main reason why these customs survived a hard struggle of more than one century and the *Muḥarram, Bherā* and mystic cults have mostly died out in the *Sunnī* society of Bengal.

SECTION C.

Socio-economic Background

To the originally religious reform movement of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh, Dudu Miyān added a strong socio-economic bias; and in this socio-economic field, the *Farā'iḍī* movement attained the zenith of its popularity by providing a platform for the peasant agitation against the oppressive Hindu *zamīndārs* and European indigo planters[2]. This new development of the movement was a natural growth compelled by a combination of circumstances. It may be recalled that the doctrine of *tawḥīd* or monotheism, as propounded by Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh, consisted of two parts, *viz.*, (i) acceptance of the doctrine of the unity of God, and (ii) rejection

1 A comparison of the arguments advanced by the supporters of the new doctrines and old customs, clearly shows that the latter were setting assertion against the solid reasons of the former. An illustration of these tendencies will be found in Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī's argument in favour of *taqlīd* as against the arguments advanced by Mawlawī Wilāyat 'Alī and Mawlawī 'Abd al-Jabbār in favour of *ijtihād* (see *supra.*, p. 50 f.)

2 See *infra.*, chapters iv and viii.

of all polytheistic accretions and sinful innovations[1]. In accordance with this doctrine, the Ḥājī directed his followers to refrain from any such activity which might directly or indirectly militates against the ideal of monotheism. In this context, the *Farā'iḍīs* came in conflict with the *zamīndārs* for the following reasons :—

In the first place, following the Permanent Settlement of A.D. 1793, the big *zamīndārīs* of Eastern Bengal were mostly owned by the Hindu *zamīndārs*. The *abwābs* or illegal cesses which were levied by them on the peasantry included several items of idolatrous cesses, such as *srudh* or *srāddha Kharchā*, *paitā kharchā, Rath kharchā*[2], and *Durga* vritti[3]. Ḥājī S͟harī'at Allāh being the exponent of pure monotheism, objected to the payment of these illegal cesses on the part of the *Farā'iḍīs*, for he viewed them as encouraging polytheism. He, therefore, directed his followers to abstain from paying them. This went against the economic interest of the *zamīndārs*, who, being enraged by this daring action of the *Farā'iḍī* leader, imposed in addition a beard-tax on the *Farā'idīs* in accordance with the precedence set by the *zamīndar* of the 24 Parganahs on the followers of Titu Mīr[4]. This further aggravated the conflict between the *Fara'iḍī* peasantry and the Hindu *zamīndārs*.

Secondly, taking advantage of the weakness of the Muslim masses as a result of the overthrow of the Muslim official class and the impoverishment of the Muslim gentry still living in the rural areas, the powerful Hindu *zamīndars* prohibited the slaughter of cows within their estates. This restriction was also opposed by the *Fara'iḍī* leader; for, he deemed it not only unjust but also

1 See *supra*.

2 See *infra.*, Appendix "C", p. 127.

3 *Cf.* James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, p. 24 ; see also *infra.*, chapter iv, pp. 26 and 29.

4 See *supra.*, p. 1.

encouraging idolatry as it was imposed solely on account of the Hindu conception of the divinity of cows[1].

Thirdly, even earlier in A.D. 1831, the Hindu *zamīndārs* apprehended danger at the emphasis laid by Ḥājī Sh̲ari'at Allāh on the unity and brotherhood of his followers who were drawn from the peasantry. For the idea of unifying the Muslim peasantry who formed the majority of the population of Dacca-Jalalpur district (*i.e.*, modern Dacca and Faridpur), conveyed a potential threat to the interest of the Hindu *zamīndārs*. Hence, they took steps to nip the new movement in the bud[2].

Ḥājī Sh̲arī'at Allāh was, however, primarily a religious reformer and scrupulously avoided anything which might implicate him into politics. Hence, in spite of strained relations between the two parties, no serious conflagration took place between the *Farā'iḍīs* and the Hindu *zamīndārs* during his life time. On the other hand, Dudu Miyān being a man of bold nature, viewed the situation from a different angle and began to adopt a stronger policy even before he was elected to the leadership of the movement[3].

The coercive measures of the *zamīndārs* did little to check the growth of the *Farā'iḍī* movement[4]. The championing of the cause of the peasantry by Dudu Miyān made it even more popular than before and helped its rapid spread throughout Eastern Bengal[5]. Backed by popular support, Dudu Miyān felt strong enough on the second year of his leadership (A.D. 1841) to challenge the right of the *zamīndārs* to levy illegal cesses and determined to resist the realisation of such cesses by force. This new policy of the

1 According to local information gathered by the present writer from the town of Barisal in 1958, cow was publicly slaughtered there for the first time in 1930, when a Muslim Deputy Superintendent of Police was posted there.

2 See *infra.*, chapter iii, p. 15 ff.

3 See *infra.*, chapter iv, p. 25 ff.

4 *Cf.* James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, p. 22 f ; and *Trial of Dudu Miyan*, pp. 3 and 47.

5 See *infra.*, chapter iv, p. 29 ff.

movement resulted in a series of violent conflicts, large-scale affrays and accusations and counter-accusations in the law courts from A.D. 1841 to 1846. The continuous victory of Dudu Miyān in almost all of these conflicts, gave him an invincible superiority over the *zamīndārs*[1].

From A.D. 1795 onwards, the Englishmen had made enormous investment of capital in the indigo industry of rural Bengal. During the first half of the nineteenth century, indigo came to be regarded as the most important export goods of Bengal[2]. In the districts of Dacca, Faridpur and the Madaripur subdivision of Bakarganj, where the *Farā'iḍīs* were most influential, numerous indigo factories were set up by European planters. Indigo was grown by contracts with the peasantry and the mode in which this contract system was developed, proved to be a forced cultivation[3]. For, the lands of the *ra'iyats* in which indigo was to be sown was marked out by the planter irrespective of the wishes of the *ra'iyats* and the latter had no choice but to sow indigo in them. Moreover, in the process of the payment of remuneration various complicacies cropped up to the utter disadvantage of the *ra'iyats*. Naturally the *ra'iyats* became averse to indigo cultivation from about A.D. 1822[4].

About A.D. 1841, the *Farā'iḍīs* came in conflict with Mr. Dunlop, an indigo planter of Madaripur, and complained that his manager of Panch Char factory, namely Kali Prasad Kanjhi Lal oppressed them like the Hindu *zamīndārs*. In the process of defending the rights of the *Farā'iḍī* peasantry, Dudu Miyān naturally came in conflict with Mr. Dunlop and

1 See *infra*, chpter iv, p. 30 ff.

2 See *infra*.

3 See *infra*.

4 *Cf. Samachar Chandrika* (Bengali Newspaper), dated the 18th May, 1822, quoted in Brajendranāth Bandopādhāy ed. : *Sāmbād Patre Sekāler Kathā*, Calcutta, B.S. 1339, vol. i, pp. 108-109.

his manager. About A.D. 1846, violent affrays occured between the two parties[1].

Thus, the development of the *Farā'iḍī* movement from a purely religious programme to an economic struggle was because of its upholding the cause of the peasantry against the oppression of the *zamīndārs* and indigo planters. The great popularity of the *Farā'iḍī* movement on this account points to Dudu Miyān's successful utilisation of the antagonism of the peasantry to the *zamīndārs* and planters for the enhancement of the movement. The resentment against the oppression of the *zamīndārs* and planters was already widespread among the peasantry and Dudu Miyān lost no time to exploit it in his favour. Moreover, the widespread resentment among the peasantry and a general tendency for agitation against the *zamīndārs* and planters appear to have arisen from their mutual relationship. Hence, in order to bring out the real import of the socio-economic programme of the *Farā'iḍī* movement, an examination of the landlord-peasant and planter-ra'iyat relationship as it existed during the time of Dudu Miyān (*i.e.* A.D. 1840-1862), is necessary.

Position of the Zamīndār in Rural Bengal before and after British Ascendancy :—During the Muslim rule, the *zamīndārs* occupied most important position in the rural society of Bengal. Besides being holders of *zamīndārī* estates (which accounted for about 10 per cent of the total arable lands), the *zamīndārs* were also regarded as the fiscal officers of the government in whom the task of collecting revenues from the neighbouring landholders and *ra'iyats* and a civil and a criminal jurisdiction to try minor cases, were vested. For the execution of sentence, they were, however, required to obtain approval of the higher authorities[2].

1 See *infra.*, chapter iv. There is also indication that Mr. Dunlop had joined hands with the Hindu *zamīndārs* even earlier in resistiag the introduction of *Farā'idī* doctrines among their tenants. In B.S. 1245, that is A.D. 1839-1840, Dr. Dunlop tried to implicate Dudu Miyān in a case of plunder before the Magistrate (see trail of Dudu Miyān, pp. 3 and 47 as well as Appendix, p. 3).

2 *Cf. Calcutta Review* vol. xii, A.D. 1849, p. 517 ff.

They were also assigned the Police duty of their areas and in order to enable them to prosecute this duty satisfactorily, an establishment of rural Police was attached to their *zamīndārī*[1]. Moreover, by the terms of the *zamīndārī* grant (*sanad*), they were bound to produce the robber and the plundered goods in case of any robbery being committed within their areas[2]. They were also bound to co-operate with the authorities of the civil and criminal courts in apprehending criminals and anti-social elements[3]. Thus, in the rural society, they represented not only the higher class but also the interest of the government.

It may, however, be noted that the assignment of the *zamīndārī* was theoretically made on a temporary basis for a term of years or for the lifetime of a *zamīndār*. But in practice, the successors of the *zamīndār* were generally allowed to inherit the estate provided the stipulated revenues were regularly paid. The *zamīndārs* of Bengal were often considered to be short-sighted and selfish, and hence prone to be oppressive to the *ra'iyats* and to be refractory to the government. The whole country was, therefore, divided into a number of districts or *fawjdārī* and a *fawjdār* with the rank of 1,000 to 4,000 horses, was appointed to each. The most important duty of the *fawjdār* was to keep the *zamīndārs* under constant vigilance and, whenever necessary, to "administer correction to them"[4]. Being the administrative head of the district, the *fawjdār* was also responsible for the maintenance of peace and tranquillity by suppressing all sorts of lawlessness, apprehending criminals, guarding the high ways, protecting the tax-payers and checking all excesses and oppressions, especially on the multitude[5].

1 *Cf. Calcutta Review*, vol. xii, A.D. 1849, p. 528.

2 *Ibid.*, pp. 522-28.

3 *Ibid.*

4 *Cf. Siyar al-Muta'akhkherīn* (English Translation by M. Raymond), Calcutta, 1902, vol. iii, pp. 178 ff and 204-205.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 204.

In all events, whether for faithlessness to the government or oppression on the people, the *zamīndārī* was liable to be snatched away as a measure of punishment. The temporary nature of the *zamīndārī* tenure and the vigilance exercised by the *fawjdār*, therefore, operated as checks to the excesses of the *zamīndār*.

Under the British rule, the position of the *zamīndār* appears to have undergone a substantial change. In the first place, his jurisdiction to try minor civil and criminal cases was withdrawn and vested in the law courts. Secondly, in A.D. 1793, the *zamīndārī* Police was abolished and replaced by government Police[1]. Thirdly, in A.D. 1892, the *zamīndars* were relieved of the responsibility of producing the robbers and plundered goods in the event of any robbery being committed within their estates and declared responsible only in cases of "their connivance with the robbers should be fully proved"[2].

Hastings's policy of lease-farming revenues to the highest bidders (A.D. 1772-1793) and Lord Cornwallis's Permanent Settlement (A.D. 1793), had drastically affected the old landed gentry of Bengal. In the first place, the lease-farming system stipulated cash security which the old *zamīndārs* were unable to pay and the policy of leasing the *zamīndārīs* to the highest bidders attracted a class of speculators from among the *bāniyāns* (brokers of trade), *gomashtahs* (agents and managers of trading concerns) *mahājans* (money lenders) and bankers, all Hindu, who had ready money to undertake such enterprises. Secondly, it is estimated that one-third to one-half of the *zamīndārīs* belonging to the old gentry was sold by the rigours of the laws privided by the Permanent Settlement, which were mostly bought by the rich parvenus of Calcutta[3]. Thirdly, the general tendency of the Permanent Settle-

1 *Cf. Calcutta Review*, vol. xii, A.D. 1849, p. 528.

2 *Ibid.*, vo. xii, 528, and vol. iii, A.D. 1847, pp. 150-51.

3 *Cf.* N.K. Sinha : *Economic History of Bengal, from Plassey to Permanent Settlement*, Calcutta, 1956, vol. i, p. 4.

ment was to recognise the Hindu *Nā'ibs* and *Shiqdārs* (*i.e.*, managers and tax-collectors of the *zamīndārī* estates) who were in the employ of the old Muslim and Hindu *zamīndārs*, as landlords[1]. An English document recovered by an English officer in A.D. 1842, states that in one district of Bengal "may now be seen about a dozen of landlords among whom the whole of the soil, with the exception of a few rent-free tenures, is parcelled out. All save two are men whose fathers were menials [*i.e.*, of the old *zamīndārs*] and adventurers of the lowest extraction"[2]. James O'Kineally observes that the above policy elevated the Hindu tax-collectors, who up to that time had held but unimportant position, to the status of landlords[3].

The revenue policy of the British government, thus, effected a change, not only in the tenure of the *zamīndārī* but in the process of that change, the old landed gentry was also replaced by a commercial class of Hindus and by the managers and tax-collectors of the old gentry. This change of hands appears to have brought about a corresponding change in the character of landlord-peasant relationship.

According to an experienced English officer (who wrote in A.D. 1842), the old landed gentry, in spite of their many faults, developed a filial affection for the mass of the people through long and hereditory association with them. Being men of honour, they were actuated in their dealings with the masses by the sentiments of "pride and love" in return of the humble devotion of the peasantry and on account of "terror and shame" at their curses. These sentiments filled their hearts and disposed them to "cherish and protect" the flock of brethren committed to their charge[4]. In their different capacity as *zamīndārs*, representative of the government and protector and patron of the people, they

1 *Cf.* W.W. Hunter : *Our Indian Musalmans.* London, 1871, p. 159.

2 *Cf. Calcutta Review*, vol. i, A.D. 1844, p. 193.

3 *Cf.* W.W. Hunter : *Our Indian Musalmans, op. cit.*, p. 160.

4 *Cf. Calcutta Review*, vol. i, A.D. 1844, p. 189 f.

"held sway over the hearts as well as on the life and fortune" of the mass of the people, who on their part looked towards them for leadership and guidance from the depth of the village life[1].

The modern *zamīndārs* who succeeded them were, on the other hand, a class of businessmen and adventurers, who invested their capital or grapsed landed property solely for reaping rich profits out of it. In A.D. 1842, the head of the Bengal Police reported that the *zamīndārs* of Faridpur did not care for anything beyond extorting all they could from their tenants by any means[2]. Another document published in A.D. 1844, says that the first care of some of these new *zamīndārs* after gaining possession of landed property, was to "harbour colonies of roving banditti and share their plunder"[3]. It further accuses them of employing banditti as a fixed source of income[4]. This is corroborated by the report of the Magistrate of Dacca-Jalalpur (*i.e.*, modern Dacca and Faridpur), dated A.D. 1799, which also complains that the *zamīndārs* protected the robbers and criminals and shared their plunder[5]. Moreover, being relieved of the responsibility of "producing robbers and plundered goods" from A.D. 1792, no effective check existed to stop the excesses of the *zamīndārs*. The English Judges and magistrates (surrounded by a host of native law-officers, Police and clerks who were bribed by the *zamīndārs*), were helpless to right the wrongs: rather, by the cunning manipulation of the *zamīndārs*, they often proved instrumental to add to the power and influence of the former[6]. In A.D. 1842, the head of the Bengal Police stated that the Hindu *zamīndārs* of Fāridpur appeared to have done every thing which

1 *Cf. Calcutta Review*, vol. i, A.D. 1844, p. 189 f.

2 *Ibid.*, pp. 215-16.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 193.

4 *Ibid.* p. 194.

5 *Cf.* "A Police Report of the Zilah Dacca-Jalalpur dealing with the manners and morals of the people" (edited by the present writer), *J.P.H.S.*, vol. vii, part i, 1959, pp. 29. and 33.

6 *Cf. Calcutta Review*, vol. i. A.D. 1844, p. 189 f. and 194 f.

could degrade the Muslim peasants, their religion and even their females[1].

An English offlcer characterised the change by which the old landed gentry was replaced by the new class of *zamīndārs* as a "loathsome revolution" which elevated a class of "miscreant adventurers" to the position of land-holders whose oppressive hands "penetrate into and devour the most secret fibres, not of political but of social and domestic existence" and to whom the old spirit of patriarchal and feudal tenderness which protected the masses from destruction, was not known[2]. The head of the Bengal Police observed in A.D. 1842, that numerous instances show that the bad passion of the *zamīndārs*, "strengthened by a sense of immunity from all control by the Police, nay, of their protection by that body at the time of actual commission of crimes". often lead to daring crimes and licentious tyranny[3]. Another English officer says that the "absolute impunity" enjoyed by the *zamīndārs*, not only screens them from the vengeance of law but arms them with an irresistible power to multiply and direct every element of crime to their own profit and the gratification of the desire for rapacity inherent in adventurers divorced from every human tie that can inflict remorse[4]. No wonder, therefore, that the socio-economic conditions of rural Bengal during the first half of the nineteenth century reminded this Englishman the Robespierian regime of the Revolutionary France. He says :[5]

> "It will be found that the landlords in every district of Bengal have established a reign of terror not very remotely analogous to that of the Robespierian era of the French Revolution. Its foundations are the same, *viz.*, an unlimited command on false witnesses

1 See *infra.*, chapter iv, p. 29.

2 *Cf. Calcutta Revtiew*, vol. i, A.D. 1844, p. 196.

3 *Ibid.*, pp. 215-16.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 196.

5 *Ibid.*

> and a tribunal from which is practically banished every check which can distinguish a court from a butcher's shamble".

Evidences at our disposal show that the *ra'īyats* were affected in many ways by the Permanent Settlement. In the first place, it not only handed over the lands to the new class of *zamīndārs* in perpetuity but the power of fixing up the rent was also confided to them, which permitted reck-renting[1]. Moreover, the *zamīndārs* usually farmed out their estates to such contractors or *patnidārs* who offered them the largest profit *vis-a-vis* the government dues. The *patnidārs* again farmed them to *sub-patnidārs* on the same conditions "till farm within farm became the order of thc day, each resembling a screw over a screw, the last coming down to the tenants with the pressure of all"[2]. In A.D. 1832, Hugh Stock, the chief of the Revenue Board, mentioned a case in which the *ra'iyat* was four degrees removed from the actual *zamīndār* by *patnidārs* and *sub-patnidārs*, each of whom received a proflt, which was undoubtedly squeezed out of the income of the *ra'iyat*[3]. Buchanon found that exactions by confinement or blows was most common and the grant of false receipts by taking advantage of the illiteracy of the *ra'iyat*, was commonly resorted to by the agents of the *zamīndārs* and *patnidars*[4]. The contention of Hugh Stock is corroborated by a local newspaper, which deplored in A.D. 1833, the existence of four to five degrees of *patnidārs* in almost all *zamīndārī* estates[5].

Secondly, Metcalfe characterised the Permanent Settlement as the most sweeping act of oppression by which the landed property of the country was transferred from the class of people

1 Mallick : *Briiish Policy*, p. 52.

2 *Ibid.*, pp. 51-52.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 52.

4 *Cf.* M. Martin : *The History, Antiquities, Topography and Statistics of Eastern India*, London, A.D. 1838, vol. ii, p. 909.

5 *Cf.* Brajendranāth Bandopādhāy, ed. : *Sambād Patre Sekāler Kathā*, Calcutta, B.S. 1342, vol. iii, p. 298.

entitled to it to a set of *Baboos* or Hindu gentlemen "who made their wealth by bribery and corruption". He regarded Lord Cornwallis as the creator of private property for the *zamīndārs* by destroying hundreds or thousands of proprietors for every one of them[1]. In this process, many *ra'iyats* and sub-tenure holders were dispossessed of their land-rights. This was rendered possible especially because the settlements were usually made without survey, without records of landed rights and even without ascertaining the boundaries of estates[2]. Thus, an English officer found the multitude of rural Bengal in A.D. 1842, "lie trembling on the remotest verge of human misery and brutalisation" and says that no honest and thoughtful person would deny that a peculiar combination of desolating causes was at the root of their misery and which was also responsible for the destruction of their happiness. The main cause, in his opinion, was the overthrow of the old landed gentry by a class of adventurers[3].

Thirdly, in the normal process of justice, redress against the oppression of the *zamīndārs* was almost unattainable to the ignorant masses because of the complicated system of civil procedure introduced by the British, the huge expenditure it incurred on the parties to a suit, and the corruption and bribery in which the *zamīndārs* and their agents were adept[4]. At one time, complaints are said to have crowded upon Hastings whereupon he only had the mortificat on on finding that the existing system of law left him "without the means of pointing out to the complainants any mode" for getting redress[5]. In A.D. 1782, Sayyid Ghulām Ḥusayn Khān reported that the *zamīndārs* succeeded in getting their servants, favourites, dependents, spies and emissaries into the service of the government; and in collusion

1 *Cf.* J.W. Kaye : *Selections from the Papers of Lord Metcalfe*, London, 1855, p. 254.

2 Mallick : *British Policy*, p. 33.

3 *Calcutta Review*, vol. i, A.D, 1844, p. 189f.

4 Mallick : *British Policy*, p. 53.

5 *Ibid.*

with these hosts of government servants, they "commit upon the inhabitants a variety of oppressions" with utmost safety[1]. In A.D. 1799, the Magistrate of Dacca-Jalalpur (*i.e.*, modern Dacca and Faridpur) complained that the *zamīndars* concealed and secretly protected the decoyts (*i.e.*, robbers) and the agents of the *zamīndars* attending the law courts "often act as their spies and give them secret information of any measure taken by the Magistrate against them"[2]. In A.D. 1842, the head of the Bengal Police accused the Police of being in collusion with the oppressive *zamīndars*[3]. The above evidences, which can be enormously multiplied, show that the chances for the *ra'iyats'* getting redress of their grievances against the *zamīndars* were bleak.

Indigo industry in Bengal: Indigo was cultivated in Bengal from early times. As an export goods, indigo of Bengal found its way to European market in the middle of the seventeenth century[4]. It began to attract European capitalists from the close of the eighteenth century. In A.D. 1795, Mr. Bond, a "free merchant," erected an indigo factory at Rupdiya, in the district of Jessore[5]. Next year Mr. Tuft obtained permission from the government to start an indigo factory at Mahmudshahi, in the same district, and about A.D. 1800, Mr. Taylor is reported to own several indigo works. In A D. 1801, Dr. Anderson, the Civil Surgeon, erected two big factories, one at Nilganj and the other at Berandi, in the district of Jessore[6].

According to government sources, indigo was an indigenous industry in Nadiya, and the big European concerns sprang from

1 *Cf. Siyār al-Muta'akhkherīn* (English Translation by M. Raymond), *op. cit.*, vol. iii, p. 175.

2 *Cf. J.P.H.S.*, vol. vii, part i, p. 33.

3 See *infra.*, chapter iv.

4 *Cf.* Mallick : *British Policy*, p. 53, foot note 3.

5 *Cf.* L.S.S. O'Malley : *Bengal District Gazetteers, Jessore*; Calcutta, 1912 p. 40.

6 *Ibid.*

"very small native factories" that were bought up by the Europeans[1]. In A.D. 1805, the produce of indigo in Bengal and Bihar amounted to 64,000 maunds, which sufficiently indicates its extensive cultivation and importance as an export goods[2]. In A.D. 1811, the district of Jessore is described as being "crowded with indigo factories"[3]. Gradually, the whole of Bengal, especially the "indigo districts", namely Faridpur, Dacca, Jessore, Rajshahi, Nadiya and Murshidabad, became "dotted with indigo concerns" owned by English capitalists[4].

Prompted by the rush of English capital to rural Bengal, the indigo industry flourished by leaps and bounds. In A.D. 1843, the annual output of Indigo in Bengal and Bihar had "doubled" the figure of 1805[5], *i.e.*, amounted to about 1,29,610 maunds. Naturally, indigo manufacture was regarded as the "most important industry" of rural Bengal during the first half of the nineteenth century[6].

Thus, as the policy of revenue farming and Permanent Settlement attracted the parvenus of Calcutta for capital investment, so also the indigo industry attracted the English capitalists to invest enormous sum in the rural economy of Bengal. The former, however, came as *zamīndārs* and as such represented only a change of hands ; but the latter being industrialists, opened up a new and profitable avenue in the rural economy of Bengal. How far the indigo planters were profited by their capital investment, does not concern us here. Our interest lies in forming an opinion

1 J.H.E. Garrett : *Bengal District Gazetteers, Nadia*, Calcutta, 1910, p. 32.

2 *Cf.* Mallick : *British Policy*, p. 53.

3 *Cf.* L.S.S. O'Malley : *Bengal District Gazetteers, Jessore, op. cit.*, p. 40.

4 *Cf.* J.H.E. Garrett : *Bengal District Gazetteers, Nadia, op. cit.*, p. 32 ; L.S S. O'Malley : *Bengal DIstrict Gazetteers, Jessore, op. cit.*, p. 40.

5 *Cf.* Mallick : *British Policy*, p. 53.

6 *Cf.* J.H.E. Garrett : *Bengal District Gazetteers, Nadia, op. cit.*, p. 32 ; L.S.S. O'Malley : *Bengal District Gazeteers. Faridpur*. Calcutta, 1925, p. 34 ; and Brajendranāth Bandopādhāy, ed. : *Sambād Patre Sekāler Kathā*, Calcutta. B.S. 1339 (extract from contemporary Bengali newspaper), vol. i, p. 198.

about the influence that was exerted by them on the rural populace and on rural life. Hence, our study will be confined to three important points, *viz.*, (i) the status of the planters in the socio-economic organisation of the rural society, (ii) the mode of indigo cultivation, and (iii) whether indigo industry was profitable to the peasantry or not.

(i) *The Status of the Planter* :—In setting up a factory, two things are generally noticeable : an application to the government for licence and another for the allotment of land[1]. It does not, however, appear that at the early stage the planters acquired more quantity of lands than what was barely necessary for the erection of the factories. But, soon the European planters gained an important position in the rural society and their growing influence alarmed the *zamīndārs* and sub-tenure holders, who, finding their influence being interfered with by the planters, endeavoured to stir up a feeling against indigo cultivation. This clash of interests led to quarrels and disputes and eventually to violent fighting. For, the planters took a serious view of the situation and according to government sources, had recourse to "fighting the native *zamīndārs* with bands of clubmen"[2]. Garrett says that the planters were driven to this extreme measure by their failure "to get redress from the Courts"[3]. The fact that in spite of being Englishmen, they could not get redress from the English Courts, indicates that the planters were on the wrong side.

This conflict is said to have induced the planters to buy "real property" even at "fancy prices" in order to be able to provide lands to the cultivators to grow indigo and thereby to get rid of the annoyance and hostility of the native proprietors of land. The planters thus "surmounted the difficulty" arising from their clash of interests with the *zamīndārs* "by themselves becoming proprietors and sub-tenure holders of the lands" that surrounded their

1 *Cf.* L.S.S. O'Malley : *Bengal District Gazetteers, Jessore, op. cit.*, p. 40.

2 *Cf.* J.H.E. Garrett : *Bengal District Gazeteers, Nadia, op. cit.*, p. 32.

3 *Ibid.*

factories[1]. Hence, O'Malley could state without hesitation that an indigo concern represented by its manager in the district, "was to all intents and purposes a *zamīndārī* of the lands belonging to the concern"[2]. The planters themselves appear to have behaved like the *zamīndārs*. They are accused by the Judge of Nadiya in A.D. 1854, of levying illegal cesses on the tenants with which they "inadequately requited the services of labourers, boatmen, and hackney drivers"[3]. Thus, although the planter was primarily an industrialist, his position in the rural society was analogous to that of a *zamīndār*.

(ii) *The Mode of Indigo Cultivation :*—At the early stage of the industry, the European concerns did not hold lands for the purpose of growing indigo plants. Hence, the planters usually entered into an agreement with the cultivators through the head-man of the village to the effect that a certain portion of land of the village be set apart for the cultivation of indigo. At the beginning of the season (*i e.*, in October), the planter ear-marked the requisite lands for indigo cultivation and made over the necessary quantity of indigo seeds to those *ra'iyats* whose lands were thus chosen[4].

O'Malley holds that lands "suitable for indigo were not generally very suitable for paddy". It will be seen later that this opinion is not borne out by facts though it may be admitted that rotation of indigo and paddy cultivation, as he says, benefited the two crops[5]. At any rate, the cultivation of indigo was simple and less laborious than that of other crops ; for, it required no care in between sowing of the seed and cutting of the plants. When the plants were ready for sickle, they were cut, collected in "bundles"

1 *Cf.* J.H.E. Garrett : *Bengal District Gazetteers, Nadia, op. cit.*, pp. 32-33.

2 *Cf.* L.S.S. O'Malley : *Bengal District Gazetteers, Jessore, op. cit.*, p. 103.

3 *Cf. Selections from the Records of the Government of Bengal,* No. xxxiii, part i, *Papers related to Indigo Cultivation in Bengal,* Calcutta, 1860, p. 4.

4 *Cf.* L.S.S. O'Malley : *Bengal District Gazetteers, Jessore, op. cit.*, p. 104.

5 *Ibid.*

and presented to the factory by the *ra'iyat*. In an average good field of one *bighā* (or ⅓ of an acre) six bundles of plants were expected and for each bundle the *ra'iyat* received six annas ⅜ Rupee). Hence, in a good season the *ra'iyat* received an amount of Rs. 2¼ as the hire and wage-labour for a *bigha* of land[1].

O'Malley says that this was "probably a fair price for the production of one *bigha* of land during the first half of the nineteenth century" though at the "close" of that period it was "rediculously low", as the same average good field would bring a profit of Rs. 16 to Rs. 20, if paddy is sown in it instead of indigo[2]. On the basis of above calculation, the English writers generally agree that the *ra'iyats* were not averse to indigo cultivation at the beginning but became so later on when the price of other crops, especially that of paddy, "had been doubled" and when the wage of "agricultural labour also went up". For, the price of indigo paid by the planters remained "stationery" though the *ra'iyats* were "still required to cultivate indigo to the same extent as before"[3]. The above evidence shows that about A.D. 1850, the *ra'iyat* was normally 5 to 7 times loser for cultivating indigo instead of rice.

(iii) *The Indigo Industry and the Peasantry*: Gastrell, the Director of Survey (A.D. 1856-1862), noted that the numerous indigo and sugar factories in the districts of Jessore and Faridpur, imparted an air of civilisation[4]. According to O'Malley and Garrett, the districts of Jessore and Nadiya became "dotted with indigo concerns"[5] as early as A.D. 1811. The introduction of a large-scale industry in Rural Bengal and the establishment of innumerable factories in the country-side opened up many new

1 *Cf.* L.S.S. O'Malley : *Bengal District Gazetteers, Jessore, op. cit.*, p. 104.

2 *Ibid.*

3 *Cf.* L.S.S. O'Malley : *Bengal District Gazetteers, Faridpur, op. cit.*, p. 30 ; J.H.E. Garrett : *Bengal District Gazetteers, Nadia, op. cit.*, p. 32, and L.S.S. O'Malley : *Bengal District Gazetteers, Jessore, op. cit.*, pp. 103-104.

4 J.E. Gastrell : *Geographical and Statistical Report of the District of Jessore, Fureedpore and Backergunge,* Calcutta, A.D. 1868, p. 7.

5 See *Bengal District Gazetteers, Jessore, op. cit.*, p. 40 and *Nadia*, p. 32.

opportunities. In the first place, it offered a good deal of employment to the villagers; secondly, as the managers and the employees of the factories lived in the villages, they enriched the coffers of the village shop-keepers and of the producers of foodstaffs; and thidrly, the presence of many educated persons, such as the managers, sub-managers, and clerks of the factories, in the rural society was likely to shed the light of civilisation. Thus, the indigo industry could have been a channel, not only for raising the living standard in rural Bengal but also for moral and intellectual upliftment of the mass of the people.

But the findings of the Inquiry Commission of A.D. 1860, pointed on the contrary that the mode of indigo cultivation was ruinous to the peasantry. The Judge of Bakarganj says that in spite of all general advantages, I have not the slightest doubt that the indigo has been obtained on a system ruinous to the Planters' tenants;...then, however valuable indigo may be as an article of commerce, it would be better for the sake of the Ryots if there was not a stick of Indigo in the land"[1]. The Judge of Nadiya says, "my own idea, however, is that it is no longer enough to measure the advantages of European capital and energy by the value of our exports of Indigo : the effect of the system upon the people should also be considered"[2]. The point, therefore, calls for a close examination.

In the first place, it has been noted above that for setting up a factory the planters applied to the government for "licence" and "allotment of land". It is not known whether any specific jurisdiction was also given to each factory at this early stage. Disputes, however, soon arose among the planters themselves as to the right of the owner of a factory "to sow in different villages"[3], especially in the neighbourhood of another factory. Even as late

1 *Selections from the Records of the Government of Bengal*, No. xxxiii, part i, *Papers related to Indigo Cultivation in Bengal*, Cālcutta, 1860, pp. 68-69

2 *Ibid.*, p. 1

3 *Cf.* J.H.E. Garrett : *Bengal District Gazetteers*, *Nadia*, *op. cit.*, p. 32.

as A.D. 1839, "bloody conflicts" are reported to have occurred among them on this issue[1]. Consequently the government laid down the boundaries of areas for different indigo factories beyond which no party could extend its indigo cultivation "except under a penalty"[2]. Thus, in course of time, each indigo factory acquired a specific jurisdiction within which it had the exclusive right to grow indigo.

Secondly, taking the advantage of their superior position as Englishmen and of their monopolistic jurisdiction, the planters compelled the *ra'iyats* to sow indigo under duress even when the latter were unable or unwilling to do so. According to a contemporary local newspaper the *ra'iyats* became generally averse to indigo cultivation in eighteen-twenties, owing to the mode of contract in which they were forced to enter[3]. This information is significant because it contradicts the opinion of the English writers that the aversion of the *raï'yats* was due to the rise of the price of paddy[4]. It may be recalled that the mode of indigo cultivation at the beginning was simple: the seed was given free of cost, the *ra'iyat* sowed it in his land, cut the plants when ready for the sickle and collected them into bundles, then on presenting the bundles to the factory, he received his due[5]. The land was, however, marked out by the planter[6] irrespective of the wishes of the *ra'iyat* who owned the land[7], and the *ra'iyat* had no alternative but to sow indigo in it. Nevertheless, as paddy was selling at a very low price, indigo cultivation was profitable. In eighteen-

1 *Cf. Brajendranāth Bandopādhāy, ed.*: *Sambād Patre Sekāler Kathā, op. cit.*, vol. iii, p. 294.

2 *Cf.* J.H.E. Garrett : *Bengal District Gazetteers, Nadia, op. cit., p.* 32.

3 *Cf. Samāchār Chandrikā*, dated the 18th May, 1822, quoted in Brajendranāth Bandopādhāy, ed. : *Sambād Patre Sekāler Kathā*, Calcutta, B.S. 1339, vol. i, pp. 108-109.

4 See *supra.*, p. xcix.

5 See *supra.*, p, xcix ff.

6 *Cf.* L.S.S. O'Malley : *Bengal District Gazettieers, Jessore, op. cit.*, p. 104.

7 *Ibid.*

twenties, the mode of transaction between the planter and the *ra'iyat* appears to have changed. For, in this period and afterwards the practice of taking advance-money (*dādni*) by the *ra'iyat* is almost universally noticeable, and the new mode of contract stood as follows : the *ra'iyat* received the seed as before and an advance of two rupees per *bighā* and received the rest of the amount, *i.e.*, ¼ Rupee, on delivery of the bundles[1]. *Samāchār Chandrikā*, a Bengali newspaper (18 May, 1822) states that the *ra'iyats* would neither take advance nor sow indigo willingly because of the mode of contract in which he was forced to take *dādnī* or advance money[2]. As, down to A.D. 1836, paddy was selling at the rate of 4 maunds per rupee[3], the wage for growing indigo at the rate of 2¼ rupees, was a considerable sum. Hence the argument of the English writers that the reluctance of the *ra'iyat* was due to the rise of the price of rice proves untenable.

Thirdly, from the legal point of view, a contract implies free choice of the parties concerned. But. as the *ra'iyat* had no choice either in the allotment of land or in the matter of sowing, the indigo cultivation was always a forced cultivation. A. Sconce, Judge of Nadiya, says (A.D. 1854) that the *ra'iyats* "are working cattle merely, not men reconciled to labour by their gains"[4]. A. Grote, Officiating Commissioner of Nadiya Division, says (A.D. 1856) that "disputes" between the planter and the *ra'iyat* "regarding the forcible sowing of Indigo must, to a certain extent, always exist : for it must be clear to everyone that the cultivation of indigo is for the most part distasteful to the Ryots, who would much prefer cultivating rice and other crops of grain, and seldom, if ever, voluntarily take advances for Indigo"[5].

1 *Cf. Selections from the Records of Government of Bengal*, No. xxxiii, part i : *Papers related to Indigo Cultivation in Bengal*, Calcutta, 1860, pp. 110-111.

2 *Cf.* Brajenranāth Bandopadhāy, ed. : *Sambād Patre Sekāler Kathā*, Calcutta, B.S. 1339, vol. 1, pp. 108-109.

3 *Ibid.*, vol. iii, p. 297.

4 *Selections from the Records of the Government of Bengal*, No. xxxiii, part i : *papers related to Indigo Cultivation in Bengal, op. cit.*, p. 4.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 93.

Fourthly, according to J. Dunbar, District Magistrate of Jessore (A. D. 1854), the planters "always insisted" on having the "best lands" of the *ra'iyats* for the cultivation of indigo, and at the same time paid "less than a fairly remunerative price" for the bundles of indigo plants when brought to the factory[1].

Fifthly, A. Sconce says that the planters of Nadiya are generally accused of measuring "two-and-a-half beegah" of the *ra'iyats* land for one *bighā* and counted two bundles of indigo plants for one bundle[2]. Gopal Lall Mitter, Deputy Magistrate of Natore (in Rajshahi) states from his personal experience (A.D. 1856) that the agents of the planters measured one-and-a-half *bighā* of land for one *bighā*, and six bundles of indigo plants for two factory bundles[3].

Sixthly, Gopal Lall Mitter further states (A.D. 1856) that the *ra'iyats* were "very unwilling to cultivate indigo on the existing system of advances". For, they get an advance of two rupees per *bigha*, and "had to pay out of these two rupees to the *gomashtahs, amīns* and *tagādgirs*, who are notoriously known to be an extortionate and oppressive class of people and who never scruple to benefit themselves at the expense of the Ryots"[4]. Judge A. Sconce says that it is universally assumed that the *ra'iyats* do not retain more than a half or a third or less than a third of the advances ostensively paid to them[5]. "I do not know" he further adds, "to what extent the advance consists partly of cash and partly of unliquidated balances of past years". He saw one case in which the *ra'iyat* received ½ Rupee in cash and 6½ Rupees were adjusted against old balances, for the cultivation of 3½ *bighā* of land[6]. Judge C. Steer says, "every honest Planter will admit

1 *Selection from the Records of the Government of Bengal*, No. xxxiii, part i : *Papers related to Indigo Cultivation in Bengal, op. cii.*, p. 15.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 3.

3 *Ibid.*, pp. 110-111.

4 *Ibid.*

5 *Ibid.*, p. 51.

6 *Ibid.*, p. 52

that no Ryot will take advance unless he is in the last extremity", and none ever gets out of "the Planter's book" who is once in it. For, "both Planter and *Mahājan* (money-lender) act in the same way—both take advantage of the Ryot's necessities and both derive a usurious profit from their dealings"[1]. Moreover, as the debt roll was taken over from father to son in case of former's death or absconding, "the chronic state of indebtedness" of the *ra'iyats* became a source of "hereditory irritation against the Planters"[2].

Seventhly, as early as A.D. 1822, the indigo planters are accused by *Samāchār Chandrikā*, a local newspaper, of committing "heartless oppression" on the *ra'iyats* and forcing them to take advance-money (*dādan or dādni*). It deplores the fact that a *ra'iyat* who take advance, never gets out of the book till his death. Moreover, his obligations to the planter makes it impossible for him to sow other crops, which often results in his flying away from the village[3]. In A.D. 1854, the Magistrate of Jessore reported that the oppression of Mr. Rainy, an indigo planter of Khulna, "compelled the ryots to abandon the village" in which his factory was situated[4]. In A.D. 1822, the above local newspaper arraigned that if a *ra'iyat* did not agree to take advance, his cattle was usually caught hold of by the planter and interned in the factory without supplying it with "grass and water"; and as the cattle becomes lean and thin day by day, the *ra'iyat* loses his patience and agrees to take advance-money in order to rescue his most valuable asset[5]. In A.D. 1854, the *ra'iyats* complained

1 *Selections from the Records of the Government of Bengal*, No. xxxiii, part i : *Papers related to Indigo Cultivatlon in Bengal, op. cit.*, p. 68.

2 J.H.E. Garett : *Bengal District Gazetteers, Nadia, op. cit.*, p. 33 ff.

3 *Cf. Samāchar Chandrika*, dated the 18th May, 1822, quoted in Brajendra nāth Bandopādhāy, ed. : *Sambād Patre Sekāler Kathā*, Calcutta, B.S. 1339, vol. i, pp. 108-109.

4 *Selections from the Records of the Government of Bengal*, No. xxxiii, part i, *Papers related to indigo Cultivation in Bengal, op. cit.*, p. 15.

5 *Cf. Samachar Chandrikā*, quoted in *Sambād Patre Sekāler Kathā, op. cit.*, vol. i, pp. 108-109.

that they were "driven by force or fear to undertake the cultivation of indigo", and that, they were not "allowed to cultivate other crops till they have sown Indigo, first it may be on the Planters' *nijjote* (own land), next on the Ryots' own lands". The *ra'iyats'* "labour and cattle being limited", it was usually "too late" for them to attend to the cultivation of other crops after having satisfied the demands of the planters[1].

Thus, it has been rightly pointed out that none but a planter would deny that the cultivation of indigo was unprofitable to the *ra'iyats*[2]. They had really nothing to gain under a system which was so corrupt and oppressive to them.

It is, therefore, clear that as Englishmen, the planters had many advantages over the *ra'iyats.* In the first place, the Indigo Commission of 1861, says that "the bias of the English Magistrate" has always been "unconsciously towards his countrymen"[3]. Secondly, Ashley Eden testifies that the higher Police officers were very often bribed by the planters[4]. Thirdly, Dr. A. R. Mallick points out that the village watchmen before whom the crimes were committed by the planters, were always silenced by violence and confinement. One Gunni [Ghanī?] Dafadar, was attacked, injured and confined for four months in a dark room for raising an outcry when one whole village was set on fire by a planter[5]. Fourthly, the planter being a British born subject was under the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court of Calcutta, which was scarcely accessible to an illiterate *ra'iyat* living in a remote village amid miserable poverty. Hence, the planter was practically beyond the reach of the law[6]. Even as late as A.D. 1877, James White, a

1 *Selection from the Records of the Government of Bengal,* No. xxxiii, part i : *Papers related to Indigo Cultivation in Bengal, op. cit.*, p. 3.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 68.

3 *Cf.* Mallick : *British Policy*, p. 56.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 55.

5 *Ibid.*

6 *Ibid.*, pp. 55-56.

planter of Nadiya, having murdered Shaykh Munṣif, a *ra'iyat*, by physical assault, could go scot-free on account of the partiality of the Magistrates and Justice Pontifex and the Jury of the High Court of Calcutta[1].

There is, therefore, little cause to wonder that the socio-economic conditions of Bengal during the first half of the 19th century should have been compared by a thoughtful English Officer, to the Robespierian regime of the Revolutionary France[2] as has been quoted above.

Conclusion : The above evidence shows that the land revenue policy of the British from A.D. 1772 onwards and the introduction of large-scale indigo industry in rural Bengal from A.D. 1795, had attracted enormous capital investment from Calcutta. But contrary to all expectation, the capitalists were not only reluctant to share a portion of their profit with the peasantry who laboured for them, but adopted various extortionate and oppressive measures which made the economic condition of the peasantry worse than before. Oppressed by the *zamīndārs* on the one side and by the indigo planters on the other, the peasantry were reduced to last extremities and the government administration practically did little to redress their grievances against the oppressors. The chronic and widespread resentment which gradually accumulated among the peasantry naturally sought outlet in occasional outbursts. The real import of the affrays and riots, which not infrequently took place between the *ra'iyats* on the one hand and the *zamīndārs* and indigo planters on the other, can, therefore, be properly understood only in this context.

Titu Mīr's amazing success within a very short time (from A.D. 1827 to 1831) in organising the peasantry of 24 Parganahs into a formidable block against the Hindu *zamīndārs* and the European indigo planters, demonstrated for the first time the

1 See Appendix J, p. 149 ff.

2 See *supra*.

intensity of resentment against these two classes of exploiters as well as the general demand for efficient leadership. In other words, it showed the fundamental symptoms of a mass agitation ; and it may be said that from his time the peasant agitation of Bengal had come into being, which was to dominate the life and thought of the masses for nearly half-a-century. The struggle of the *Farā'iḍī* peasantry against the *zamīndārs* and indigo planters from A.D. 1838 to 1856, led by Dudu Miyān and the peasant agitation against the indigo planters from A.D. 1854 to 1860 represent new outlets through which this sentiment found expression.

In the contest of physical power with the *zamīndārs* and indigo planters, Titu Mīr came out victorious. But if the physical power of his enemies failed, their diplomacy won for them not only the sympathy and active support of the government but also the total annihilation of Titu Mīr and his party. For, they succeeded to allure him into a political trap by inciting him to hold his weapons against the government[1]. Dudu Miyān's success in overpowering the *zamīndārs* and the indigo planters and in keeping his legal and political position unimperilled, rather by means of strategy[2], points undoubtedly to the fact that Dudu Miyān succeeded where Titu Mir failed,

In the broader context of the peasant agitation of Bengal, the socio-economic aspect of the *Farā'iḍī* movement represented an organized attempt of tens of thousands of peasantry, brought to a common platform by religious and doctrinal ties, to get rid of the oppressions and extortions, to which they were subjected by the new class of gentry, *i.e.*, the Hindu *zamīndārs* and European planters. The great popularity gained by Titu Mīr and Dudu Miyān in this field, indicates that the type of leadership provided by them, answered to the demand of the time. Moreover, as the followers of Titu Mīr and Dudu Miyān came exclusively from the

1 See our article "The Struggle of Titu Mīr : a re-examination", *J.A.S.P.*, vol. iv, 1959, pp. 113-33.

2 See *infra.*, chapters iv and viii.

lower strata of the people to which they themselves belonged, the socio-economic aspect of their movements also indicates the growth of leadership from among the mass of the people themselves, as the requisite leadership was not forthcoming from the upper class. Hence, as the *Farā'iḍī* religious programme grew out of the necessity of self-correction of the Muslim society, so also, the *Farā'iḍī* socio-economic programme developed out of the need for leadership in the lower strata of the Muslim society of Bengal.

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PART II

FARA'IDI MOVEMENT

Chapter III

ḤĀJĪ SHARĪ'AT-ALLAH

(A.D. 1781-1840)

Early Life :

Ḥājī Shari'at Allāh, the founder of the *Farā'iḍī* movement of Bengal, came to prominence only after he started this religious reform movement about the age of 38.[1] He was born of a petty *Tālukdār*[2] family and hence did not claim a high or aristocratic birth. It is, therefore, not expected that his early life should have been recorded in a horoscope or family genealogy. Naturally, the chronology of his life has been a subject of endless controversy among scholars.[3] Nevertheless, a few fresh sources including one tomb inscription, two manuscript biographies—one in Bengali and another in Persian—and a number of printed Bengali *Puthis*[4], which have fallen into our hands, have put us on a more advantageous footing to attempt a fuller account of his life.

1 Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh was born in A.D. 1781 (see "Tomb Inscription of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh", *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan*, Dacca, vol. III, 1958, p. 195), and started his reform movement in A.D. 1818 (*see infra*).

2 See *J.A.S.P.*, vol. III. p. 187, foot note 4 ; J.E. Gastrell : *Geographical and Statistical Report of the Districts of Jessore, Fareedpore and Backergunge*, Calcutta, 1868, (hereafter referred to as *Jessore. Fareedpore and Backergunge*), p. 36, No. 151 ; and *Translation of Proceedings held in two cases tried in* 1847 *before the Session Judge of Dacca in which Doodoo Miyan and his Followers belonging to the Sect of Hajees or Faraizees*, Calcutta, Military Orphan Press, 1848 (hereafter referred to as *Trial of Dudu Miyān*, p. 268, which confirms that the Ḥājī was a petty landholder and possessed a estate of his own.

3 For an elaborate discussion of the controversies, see *J.A.S.P.* vol. III, p. 189f.

4 These were recovered by the present writer in 1948 and 1949 and are preserved at the Asiatic Society of Pakistan, Dacca.

Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh was born in A.D. 1781 at Shamail[5], a village in the Madaripur subdivision. It may be noted that Madaripur, at that time, formed a part of Bakarganj district and was transferred to the district of Faridpur in A.D. 1873.[6] His father 'Abd al-Jalil Tālukdār, a man of not very large means, died when he was hardly eight years old.[7] Thereafter, he was brought up in the family of his paternal uncle 'Azīm al-Dīn. Naturally, he could not receive proper education at his early age though his uncle and aunt—who had no male issue— treated him with tenderness. As a result, he passed his boyhood as a gay and carefree child having little to do with strict discipline.[8]

On a certain occasion, being reprimanded by his uncle, Shari'at Allāh left home and ran away to Calcutta when he was about twelve years old. There he got an opportunity to present himself to a teacher of the Holy *Qurān* namely Mawlānā Bashārat 'Alī, who, taking pity on the boy, enrolled him in his *Qur'ān* classes.[9] Having completed the reading of the *Qur'ān* he proceeded to Phurphura, in the district of Hughly, to take lessons in Arabic and Persian languages on the advice of his teacher.[10] Within two years he attained considerable proficiency in these languages, and thence proceeded to Murshidabad to meet his another uncle, 'Āshiq Miyān, who was attached to the Murshidabad Court.[11] There he continued to read Arabic and Persian under his uncle, and passed about a year in his company before 'Āshiq Miyān decided to visit their native village

5 *cf. J.A.S.P.*, vol. III., p. 187, foot note 4. In the opinion of some local people, he was born in the neighbouring village, Hajipur.

6 *cf.* Beveridge : *District of Bakarganj, its History and Statistics,* London, 1876, p. 249.

7 According to tradition current in the family of the Ḥājī, his father died when he was about 8 years old and his mother died earlier. This is supported by Munshī 'Abd al-Ḥalīm and Wazir 'Ali, Tālukdār, the Bengali biographers of the Ḥājī, who maintain that he lost his parents, in his childhood (*cf.* Munshi 'Abd al-Ḥalīm : MS. *Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh,* fol. 1 ; and Wazīr 'Alī : *Muslim Ratnahar,* p. 2).

8 Tradition current in the family of the Ḥājī, supported by Munshī 'Abd al-Ḥalīm : MS. *Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh,* fol. 1.

9 *ibid.*, fol. 2 f.

10 'Abd al-Ḥalīm : MS. *Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh,* fol. 4 f.

11 *ibid.*, fol. 4 ; and Wazīr 'Alī : *Muslim Ratnahār,* p. 2.

Shamāil. Then taking his wife and the boy Sharī'at Allāh with him, 'Āshiq Miyān set out for the district of Bakarganj in a small sail boat.[12] On the way they met a boat disaster in which both his uncle and aunt were drowned, and Sharī'at Allāh escaped by dint of good luck.[13]

This sudden calamity struck so deep in his mind that he gave up all intention to go home : rather he proceeded to Calcutta and presented himself before his old teacher Mawlānā Bashārat 'Alī.[14] The Mawlānā at that time got disgusted with the British regime and decided to emigrate to the holy city of Makkah.[15] The boy Sharī'at Allāh also wished to accompany him. They, accordingly, set out for Arabia about A.D. 1799.[16] Thus, the boy, who was later to be the founder of a revivalist movement in Bengal, got an opportunity to visit Makkah, the international centre of Islamic culture. It may also be noted that his visit to Makkah was, therefore, not the result of a premeditated plan.

His Education

Sharī'at Allāh's elementary education at Calcutta and Hughly served the basis for his higher education at Makkah, which eventually prepared him for the great role he was destined to play in his later life. Scholars differ widely in calculating the chronology of his life though all contemporary and later writers agree that he undertook the journey to Makkah at the age of 18 and returned to Bengal after an absence of 20 years.[17] On the basis of his tomb inscription (which was not available to earlier writers) we have fixed the chronology of his life as follows :[18]

Birth	A.D. 1781
Pilgrimage to Makkah	A.D. 1799
Return to Bengal	A.D. 1818
Death	A.D. 1840

12 'Abd al-Ḥalīm : MS. *Ḥaji Sharī'at Allāh*, fol. 5f.

13 *Ibid.*, fol.5-6.

14 *Ibid.*, fol. 6-7.

15 *Ibid.*, fol. 7-8.

16 See *infra.*

17 *Cf. J.A.S.P.*, Vol. III, p. 191f.

18 See *J.A.S.P.*, Vol. III, p. 195.

Hājī Sharī'at Allāh's stay in Arabia ranged from A.D. 1799 to A.D. 1818; and if his later life, *i.e.*, his role as a preacher, is any guide to his learning, it may be concluded that he took the best advantage of his stay in Makkah. James Wise and Hidayet Hosain testify that he came back from Arabia as a good Arabic scholar and a skilful disputer.[19] His tomb inscription eulogises him as "the learned of all learned, the exponent of Divine Law in eloquent and elegant tongue, the source of all guidance in the lands of Hind and Bengal, defender of religion against the menaces of the *Shi'ahs* and the disbelievers and against all misguidance, valiant fighter for righteousness against all falsehood and vanity, deliverer of Islam (which) was covered by darkness like the sun envelped in clouds, whose words in truthfulness were like mountains in the open field ..."[20] His stay in Arabia can be divided into the following three phases:—

(i) In the first phase, he spent the initial two years in the residence of one Mawlānā Murād, a Bengali domicile at Makkah, and studied Arabic literature and Islamic jurisprudence under the Mawlānā.[21] This prepared him for the regular courses in the religious seminaries of Makkah.

(ii) The second phase which is the most important, lasted for 14 years. During this period he received guidance from Ṭāhir Sombal, a *Hanafi* jurist, who, according to the *Farā'iḍīs*, was reputed for his scholasticism as Abū Ḥanīfah the junior (Chhota Abu Hanifah).[22] Under this learned scholar he studied almost all branches of religious sciences including the mysteries of Ṣufism. Ḥāji Sharī'at Allāh was also formally initiated into the *Qādiriyah* order of Ṣufism,[23] to which the *Farā'iḍis* zealously cling themselves down to the present day.

19 James Wise: *Notes on the Races, Casts and Trades of Eastern Bengal*, London, 1884 (hereafter referred to as *Eastern Bengal*), p. 22; and M. Hidāyat Ḥosain, "Farā'iḍī", *Encyclopaedia of Islâm*, 1st ed., Vol. II, p. 57.

20 See *J.A.S.P.*, Vol. III, p. 198.

21 'Abd al-Ḥālīm: MS. *Ḥaji Shari'at Allāh*, fol. 8.

22 *Ibid.*, fol. 8-9; Wazīr 'Ali: *Muslim Ratnahār*, p. 2; and Durr-i-Muḥammad: *Puthi*, p. 9.

23 'Abd al-Ḥalīm: MS. *Ḥaji Shari'at Allāh*, fol. 9.

Identity of Ṭahir Sombal :

To the *Farā'iḍis* of Bengal "Ṭāhir Sombal" is a familiar name. He is remembered by all with utmost reverence and admiration as the teacher (*Ustād*) and spiritual guide (*Murshid*) of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh. It may be noted that the *Farā'iḍīs* adhere to the *Qādiriyah* order of Ṣufism, and the chain of their spiritual guides (*Silsilat al-Murshidīn*) proceeds back to Ḥaḍrat 'Abd al-Qādir Jīlānī through Ṭāhir Sombal.[24] This alone shows in what high esteem the *Farā'iḍīs* hold him. Besides, all important *Farā'iḍīs* interpretations of *Sharī'ah* rest ultimately on the unassailable authority of Ṭāhir Sombal. But about his life and career we know very little, as all our knowledge about him is derived indirectly from the biographical data of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh. The absence of any external source coupled with the remoteness of time, has rendered the task of his identification somewhat a difficult problem.

From the *Farā'iḍī* sources this much is clear that Ṭāhir Sombal was a teacher in a religious seminary of Makkah under whom, as we have mentioned above, Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh studied religious sciences for 14 years. Also, it will be seen later that the Ḥājī met him at Makkah on his second visit (*circa* A.D. 1820) and took permisssion from him for propagating pure doctrines of Islam in Bengal.[25] Ṭāhir Sombal was, therefore, at the zenith of his fame from about A.D. 1801 to, at least, A.D. 1820.

M. Hidāyet Ḥosain's opinion that the Ḥājī's teacher whom he calls "Shaikh Ṭāhir al-Sunbal al-Makkī," and who, according to him, was the head of the Shāfi'ī sect at Makkah,[26] does not, therefore, appear to be correct. In the first place the learned scholar has not been able to cite any authority in his favour. Secondly, an examination of the *Farā'iḍī* doctrines shows that they are all *Ḥanafi*, in which not a shadow of *Shāfi'ī* influence can be traced, and which, in this respect, stand in sharp contrast with the doctrines of *Ahl-i-Ḥadīth* movement betraying considerable *Shāfi'ī* leanings. Thirdly,

24 See details in Wazīr 'Ali : *Muslim Ratnahār*, pp. 52-55.

25 See *infra*.

26 *Cf.* "Farā'iḍī", *Encyclopaedia of Islām*, Vol. II, p. 57.

the tomb inscription of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh categorically states that the Ḥājī "followed the *Ḥanafī* school of law on the path of the *Ahl al-Sunnat wa'l-Jamā't*.[27] If the Ḥājī's teacher Ṭāhir Sombal, to whom he owed almost every thing of his education and training,—was a *Shāfi'ī*, it is improbable that no *Shāfi'ī* influence should have been betrayed by the Ḥājī and his followers. Besides, Hidayet Ḥosain's opinion is contradictory to the *Farāi'ḍī* sources, which call him "Abū Ḥanīfah the Junior".

The earliest mention of Ṭāhir Sombal is found in the *Farā'iḍī Puthis*, which call him simply "Ṭāhir Sombal" or "Muḥammad Ṭāhir Sombal".[28] This is further corroborated by current tradition among the *Farā'iḍīs*. Moreover, the *Puthis* say that "Sombal" was his " 'urf" or surname, which is generally indentified with the Indian town of Sambhal (situated on the Mahishmat Nadi, Ganges, In the Muradabad district of Rohikhand)[29] by the *Farā'iḍīs* of the present time.

(iii) In the third phase, we find Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh busying himself in the time honoured university of al-Aẓhar at Cairo. 'Abd al-Ḥalīm records in his biography of the Ḥājī that after completing his study of religious sciences at Makkah he felt an urge to study "the subtleties of Islamic ideals" at Jāmi'-al-Aẓhar.[30] He, therefore, proceeded to Cairo and stayed there for two years.[31] The current tradition would have us believe that when the Ḥājī sought permission from his teacher and spiritual guide, Ṭāhir Sombal, to proceed to Cairo for the purpose of studying *Ḥikmat* or philosophy, the permission was given only with reluctance,[32] probably for fear or disapprobation of rationalism.

27 See *J.A.S.P.*, Vol. III, p. 198.

28 'Abd al-Ḥalīm : MS. *Ḥaji Sharī'at Allāh*, fol. 8 ; Durr-i-Muḥammad : *Puthi*, p. 9 ; and Wazīr 'Ali : *Muslim Ratnahār*, p. 2.

29 Sambhal is described in A.D. 1875-76, as a place where the Muslims were in a majority (cf. A.C.L. Carlleyle : *Archaeological Survey of India Report*, Vol. XII, pp. 24-27).

30 'Abd al-Ḥalīm : M.S. *Ḥaji Sharī'at Allāh*, fol. 9.

31 *Ibid.*

32 Tradition current in the family of the Ḥājī. It is said that the reluctance was due to the apprehension of Ṭāhir Sombal that the Ḥājī might study Greek retionalism at Cairo and get deluded.

It is not known whether the Ḥājī attended any regular course at the great University. He is, however, said to have spent long hours at the library of al-Azhar, Thereafter, he returned to Makkah, and paying a short visit to Madīnah decided to return to Bengal with the intention of propagating pure doctrines of Islam.[33] This time too, he was permitted by Ṭāhir Sombal with reluctance: rather, he advised the Ḥājī to pass sometime more in his company for spiritual training.[34] Thus, after an absence of about twenty years Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh returned home in A.D. 1818.[35]

As the Exponent of the Fara'idi Movement

Having fortified himself with Islamic learning, the Ḥājī proceeded to his home country for preaching. Here many local socio-religious practices observed by the Muslim masses, which might have been quite normal to him before his pilgrimage to Makkah 20 years back, appeared to him grossly superstitious and un-Islamic. An idea of these practices can be had from the contemporary and near contemporary writings. According to James Wise. "for three generations or fifty years," from the date of the passing of the *Dīwānī* of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa into the hands of the East India Company (A.D. 1765) down to the advent of the *Farā'iḍī* movement (A.D, 1818), "the Musalmans of Eastern Bengal, being without a shephered, were led more and more (away) from their national faith, and conformed...to many superstitious rites of the Hindus."[36] James Taylor, a contemporary of the Ḥājī, records a list of superstitious rites and heretic customs practised by the muslims of Dacca, Faridpur and Bakarganj, such as *Chuttee, Puttee* and *Chilla* connected with the birth of a child, and a number of other rites and ceremonies connected with circumcision, marriage and funeral, which were abolished by the Ḥājī.[37] At a later date, Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī of Jawnpur says:[38]

33 'Abd al-Ḥalīm : M.S. *Ḥaji Shari'at Allāh*, fol 10

34 Tradition current in the family of the Ḥājī.

35 See *J.A.S.P.*, Vol. III, p. 192.

39 James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, p. 21.

37 James Taylor : *A Sketch of the Topography and St tistics of Dacca*. Calcutta, 1840, p. 248. (Referred hereafter as *Topography*).

38 Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī : *Qawl al-Thābit*, p. 3.

"When this humble person toured Southern Bengal in A.H. 1389/A.D. 1872, witnessed much pauperism, lethargy and negligence in matters of religion there, in comparison to other (Muslim) lands."

In his *Puthi*, Durr-i-Muḥammad says :[39]

"Where had you been when Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh came thither (to Bengal) ?"

"Who did abolish the custom of *Fātiḥah*, the worship of shrines, and stop the corrupt Mullāh. ?"

* * * * *

"When he set his foot in Bengal, all *shirk* (polytheism) and *bid'at* (sinful innovations) were trampled down".

He then lists those *shirk* and *bid'āt* which were abolished by the Ḥājī, such as, worship of shrines of Bibi Fātimah[40], Ghāzu,[41], Kālu,[42] Pānch Pīr,[43] floating of *Bhera*[44] holding of *Jāri* or bewailing in commemoration of the martyrdom of Ḥasan and Ḥusayn,[45] observance of ceremonious dance, music and *Fātiḥah*, planting banana tree around the residence on the occasion of first menstruation of a girl and participation in the *Ratha Yātrā* and other idolatrous customs of the Hindus. Durr-i-Muḥammad goes on to say :[46]

"All these *Bid'āt* were then abolished and the sun of Islām rose high in the sky."

39 Durr-i-Muḥammad : *Puthi*, pp. 26-27.

40 For description, see James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, p. 9.

41 For details, see *ibid*, pp. 13-14.

42 For details, see *ibid*.

43 For details, see *ibid*., p. 17.

44 For details, see *ibid*., p. 12f

45 It may be noted that *Jāri* is derived from the Persian word *Zārī*, which means bewailing. In Bengali literature the term has come to be specifically used for the bewailing in commemoration of the Martyrdom of Ḥasan and Ḥusayn, two grandsons of the Prophet, and a rich variety of songs and poetry are known as *Jārī Gān* in Bengāli literature.

46 Durr-i-Muḥammad : *Puthi*, p. 27.

"Having arrived there Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh propagated (true) religion throughout Bengal."

Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh being a profound scholar in Islamic sciences, and one who had the privilege of being associated for a considerable time with the birth-place and centre of Islamic culture, must have been pained to see such deplorable state of affairs. It is no wonder therefore that he dedicated himself to the onerous task of reforming the Muslim society of Eastern Bengal; and it is certainly gratifying to read Hunter's observations, who says, "The rapid spread of the *Farā'iḍī* movement in the life time of its founder affords sufficient justification for his enthusiasm." [47]

The preaching of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh appears to have begun on his way home even before he set foot in Bengal. A number of anecdotes are current about his jonurney back home. A few of them are related below:—

(i) James Wise says that on his way home the Ḥājī fell in the hands of robbers who plundered him of all his possessions including books and souvenirs. But "finding life insupportable without books or relics" he joined the gang himself and shared many of their wanderings. "The simplicity of his character and the sincerity of his conviction," however, stirred the conscience of the wicked band, and they "ultimately became his most zealous followers." "Such is the story," says Wise, "told at the present day of the first step taken by this remarkable man." [48]

(ii) Another story is told to the effect that when the Ḥājī was passing through the Monghyr district of Bihar he found the local Muslims steeped in superstitious beliefs and practices. This touched him so deeply that he decided to stop there for a while in order to urge upon them the necessity of giving up their sinful innovations. He ultimately brought them to the right path before he started again for Bengal.[49]

47 W. W. Hunter, ed.: *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, vol. iv, p. 339.

48 James Wise: *Eastern Bengal*, p. 22.

49 'Abd al-Ḥalīm: MS. *Ḥajī Sharī'at Allāh*, p. 10.

(iii) It is narrated that when the Ḥājī arrived at the residence of his uncle 'Aẓīm al-Dīn, none was able to rocognise him on account of his long beard and big turban. Soon, however, the news spread that a Ḥājī has come from Makkah, and many came to see him. As the time of *Maghrib* (sun-set) prayer drew nigh, he called the *Adhān* (prayer-call) loudly. But, at his u ter surprise, he found not a single person present when the prayer call was over. He wondered at their depravity and said the prayer alone.[50]

After the *Maghrib* prayer he entered into the inner apartment, and found his uncle in death-bed. His uncle recognised him when he disclosed his identity and was much relieved to see him at that last moment. As he had no male issue, he asked the Ḥājī to look after his family and died that very night.[51]

It is difficult to say whether the anecdotes are true or the result of hear-say. Their genuineness though can be questioned, they do not contain any superhuman colouring, for which he *Farā'iḍīs* show little enthusiasm.

He received his next shock on the following day when the funeral of his un le was held. For, because of his disapprobation of certain un-Islamic rites on the occasion, the villagers refused to co-operate with him in the burial ceremony.[52]

These incidents led him at once to jump over the wide world with a burning desire to reform the Muslim society of Eastern Bengal. From that day on, he moved ungrudgingly addressing gatherings and preaching pure doctrines of Islam, indoors and outdoors, not only in his own village or in his own district, but in the neighbouring distr cts as well.

It is during this time that he formulated his policy and the line of reform that was to be introduced into the Muslim society of Eastern Bengal. The religious principles which were propagated

50 'Abd al-Ḥalīm : Ḥāji Shari'at Allah, pp. 10-11.
51 *Ibid.*, p. 12.
52 *Ibid.*

by him will be examined in a separate chapter. What needs be mentioned here is that he put utmost emphasis on the necessity of observing the *Farā'iḍ* or the obligatory duties prescribed by Islam. Naturally, his reform movement came to be known as the *Farā'iḍī* movement. Initially, however, his movement does not appear to have met with success. This initial failure is supposed to be the cause of his second visit to Makkah.

His Second Visit to Makkah :

James Taylor, a contemporary of the Ḥājī, categorically says, "he [Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh] visited it [Makkah] a second time and took his abode among the Wahabees".[53] This is also corroborated Wbyazīr 'Alī and 'Abd al-Ḥalīm.[54] The latter's long account of the second visit and the tradition widely current among the *Farā'iḍīs*, lead us to believe that this visit took place in between A.D. 1818 and 1820, and that, it was caused by the failure of his mission in the early stage. The Ḥājī felt that the failure was due to his negligence in taking a formal permission from his teacher.[55] It is also said that during his second visit he received an order from the Prophet in a dream to preach true Islam in Bengal.[56] The reason stated above may or may not be true, and the anecdote about the dream may be questioned as ingenious ; but the fact that the earliest *Farā'iḍīs* and their descendants are known to the present day as the *Sātāis Sani Farā'iḍī* (*i.e.*, the *Farā'iḍī* of B.S. 1227/A.D. 1820-21), tends to explain the gap in between his first return in A.D. 1818 and the second return in A.D. 1820-21.[57] The first or the

53 James Taylor : *Topography*, p. 248.

54 *Cf.* Wazīr 'Alī *Muslim Ratnahār*, p. 3 ; 'Abd al-Ḥalīm : MS. *Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh*, fol. 14-15.

55 *Cf.* 'Abd al-Ḥalīm : MS. *Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh*, fol. 13-15.

56 *Ibid.*, fol. 15 ; Wazīr 'Ali : *Muslim Ratnahār*, p. 4 ; and Durr-i-Muḥammad *Puthi*, p. 10.

57 Mawlawī 'Adīl al-Dīn, the Persian biographer of the Ḥājī states that Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh devoted himself to preaching pure doctrines of Islam on his return from Makkah in B.S. 1227/A.D. 1820-21 (*cf.* MS. *Ḥālāt-i-Kārguzārī*, fol. 7b). This view is also held by Muḥammad 'Abd al-Bārī in his *Nisār al-Dīn Aḥmad Sāheber Jīvani*, Dacca, B.S. 1359, p. 1.

second visit of the Ḥājī to Makkah, given so much prominence by the *Farā'iḍis* is of little significance to us except for acadamic interest. But what is worthy of our notice is that the Ḥājī must have started his movement with greater impetus after his second return from Makkah, especially, as on this occasion he obtained permission and blessing of his teacher and spiritual guide Ṭāhir Sombal. Probably, this is the reason why the *Farā'iḍī* movement has been popularly regarded as beginning from B.S. 1227/A.D. 1820, though we have seen earlier that it actually began in A.D. 1818 with the first return of the Ḥājī.

Spread of the Fara'idi Movement :

James Taylor, a contemporary of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh, testifies that the *Farā'iḍī* movement spread with "extraordinary rapidity". "Since his return," says Taylor, "he has been engaged in promulgating his doctrines, and he has succeeded in making converts to the number, it is estimated, of one-sixth of the Mussalman population" of the districts of Dacca, Faridpur, Bakarganj and Mymensingh. He further says that in the city of Dacca, the *Farā'iḍīs* "are supposed to comprise about one third of the Mussalman inhabitants."[58]

J. E. Gastrell, who was engaged in the survey of the districts of Faridpur, Jessore and Bakarganj from A.D. 1856 to A.D. 1862, observes that the *Farā'iḍīs* "rapidly increased in number, and the greater part of the Mahomedans of the district (of Faridpur) and many in the neighbourhood districts have now joined the sect".[59] The *Farā'iḍī* movement spread likewise in the district of Tippera during the life time of the Ḥājī.

James Wise has regarded Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh as the first preacher in the swamps of Eastern Bengal "to denounce the superstition and corruption, which a long contact with Hindu polytheism had developed".[60] "His blameless and exemplary life," observes Wise, "was admired by his countrymen, who venerated him as a father

58 James Taylor : *Topography*, p. 248.

59 J.E. Gastrell : *Jessore, Fureedpore and Backergunge*, p. 36, no 151.

60 James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, pp. 21-22.

able to advise them in seasons of adversity and give consolation in times of affliction."[61]

But as it generally happens with all new movements, the *Farā'iḍī* movement was also destined to pass through various handicaps. From the very beginning a section of the conservative Muslims detested the puritanism of the Ḥājī who were offended by his denunciation of long standing local customs. As time went on the conservative opposition grew in strength. According to a Criminal Judicial report *(Robakārī)* of the Magistrate of Dacca-Jalalpur, dated 29 April 1831, the difference of opinion on religious matters existing between the followers of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh and the inhabitants of a village called Ramnagar led to a serious quarrel and affray fighting in April 1831.[62]

The *Robakārī* calls the *Farā'iḍīs* "Tueeyyooni Ḥāl" and their opponents "Tueeyooni Sābik" and states that the latter "like the inhabitants of the country generally worship Mahomed and the different Peers" while the former, *i.e.*, the *Farā'iḍī*, "reverences neither" and in other matters also disregards established rules.[63] Barring the misconception of the English magistrate as regards the nature of Muslim worship and the consequent exaggeration, we may accept the above statement as reflecting the attachment of the old society to local customs and the puritanism of the new order established by Ḥājī Sharī'at Allah. It, therefore, points to the fact that the *Farā'iḍīs* were puritan and revivalist of the type of those who became widely known as *Wahhābīs*, whereas the rest of the local Muslims were steeped in superstitious beliefs and practices and, unlike the former, paid unusual reverence to the *Pirs* or mystic guides.

The terminology offered in the above statement is suggestive of an interesting point. The term "Tueeyyooni," more correctly "Ta'aiyunī," is derived from the Arabic word "ta'aiyun" which means "to identify". Hence the term *ta'aiyuni* implies a person who

61 James Wise: *Eastern Bengal*, p. 23.

62 See "Two Farā'iḍī Documents", *J.A.S.P.*, Vol. vi, 1961, pp. 120-24.

63 See *ibid.*, p. 124.

identifies himself with a particular trend or school of law (*madhhab*). It is well known that the Muslims of Bengal, specially in rural areas, were and still are almost to a man *Sunnī* belonging to the *Ḥanafi* school of law.[64] The name *ta'ayuni* ascribed to both the parties indicates that both belonged to the *Ḥanafi madhhab*. Probably, the term was applied in order to distinguish the *Farā'iḍīs* and their opponents from such radical revivalists who repudiated the need of any regular school of law or *madhhab* and declared themselves as the followers of the *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah* (the Tradition of the Prophet) in accordance with their own understanding and who were rebuked by their opponents as *Lā-madhhabī*, *i.e.*, belonging to no recognised school. The distinctive term "Ta'aiyunī Ḥāl" applied to the *Farā'iḍīs* obviously means "identifiers on the recent interpretation", *i.e.*, the followers of the *Ḥanafi* school in accordance with the recent revivalist interpretation; and the other term "Ta'aiyunī Sābik", more correctly "Sābiq," applied to the rest of the local Muslims implies identifiers to the *Ḥanafi* school in accordance with the traditional customs. It is further interesting to note that these followers of the local customs came later on to be known as *Sabiqī*.[65]

We have, however, no other evidence in support of the contention that the *Farā'iḍīs* were known as the "Ta'aiyunī". On the other hand, we know that the followers of Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī in Bengal were definitely known as *Ta'aiyunī*, especially during the later half of the nineteenth century, who were deadly against the *Farā'iḍīs*.[66] Although the term "Ta'aiyunī Ḥāl" vaguely corresponds to the actual doctrinal position of the *Farā'iḍis*, the *Farā'iḍī* source does not give even the remotest hint that they ever called themselves by that name. The only probable conclusion, therefore, which we can draw is that the *Farā'iḍīs* may have also called themselves *Ta'aiyuni Ḥāl* in the formative stage of their movement in

64 See our article "Research in the Islamic Revivalism of the Nineteenth century and its effect on the Muslim Society of Bengal," *Social Research in East Pakistan*, edited by Pierre Bessaignet, Asiatic Society of Pakistan, Dacca, 1960, p. 33 f. and p. 39 f.

65 See *ibid.*, p. 36 f.; and James Wise: *Eastern Bengal*, p. 7.

66 See James Wise: *Eastern Bengal*, p. 7 *et seq*. and Mawlana Karamat 'Ali: *Ḥujjat-i-Qāti'*, pp. 87-88.

order to assert their affiliation to the *Ḥanafi* school and to distinguish themselves from the so-called *La-madhhabīs*. In that case, it was naturally abandoned soon afterwards when their arch opponent Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī came to the forefront in Bengal with his *Ta'aiyunī* movement about A.D. 1839.

The *Robakāri* further states that in this case the *Farā'iḍīs* were tried in a law court and their leaders were sentenced to one year's imprisonment with labour and also awarded a fine of 200 rupees each and in default of payment of the fine, to imprisonment for a further period of one year. The camp followers were awarded similar punishment except that the fine imposed on them was only 100 rupees each. Subsequently, Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh himself was apprehended by the police. But as no evidence existed against him, he was let off after he had furnished with a bond on security of 200 rupees to keep the peace for one year.[67]

Describing the incident Biharilal Sarkar says. "in A. D. 1831 the Eastern Bengal had become excited, and in the month of April of the same year, Sharī'at Allāh of Faridpur . . . had attacked and looted a village ; the entire villege was looted because one person of that village did not accept his creed." [68] On the other hand, the *Farā'iḍīs* allege that the Hindu *zamīndārs*, who were all powerful in the district, were implicated in this case, and that the conflict between the two Muslim parties would not have flared up but for their incitement. The *Farā'iḍis* further hold that the incident took place at Nayābāri (in the modern Charigram of the Dacca district) and that, the judgment was influenced by the powerful *Zamīndārs*.[69]

James Wise says [70] :

> "The Hindu Zamīndārs were alarmed at the spread of the new creed, which bound the Muhammadan peasentry together as one man. Disputes and quarrels soon arose, and

67 See *J.A.S.P.*, Vol. vi, p. 124.

68 Biharilal Sarkar : *Titu Mīr* (in Bengali), Calcutta, B.S. 1304, p. 13.

69 Tradition current in the family of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh, and also among the *Farā'iḍī Khalifahs* of Nayābāri.

70 James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, p. 22.

> Shari'atullah was deported from Nayābārī, in the Dacca district, where he had settled."

It may be noted that after his second return from Makkah, Ḥājī Shari'at Allāh had gained a good number of followers at Nayābāri, and in order to facilitate the Ḥājī's frequent visit to that place his disciples had erected an *Āstāna* or rest house for him. In course of time Nayābāri became a major centre of *Farā'iḍī* propaganda.

In the face of above evidence Biharilal Sarkar's statement throwing all the blame on the Ḥājī and his followers, does not appear to be free from prejudice and the implication of the Hindu *zamindārs* cannot be gainsaid. Unfortunately, however, no further detail of the case is available to us.

The incident of Nayābāri points to the fact that from A.D. 1831 the *Farā'iḍī* movement came into conflict with the traditional Muslim society on the one hand and with the Hindu *zamīndārs* on the other. As time went on this conflict became more and more clear. We have already stated the reasons of the Ḥājī's conflict with the followers of the traditional customs. Later on their conservative sentiment was espoused by Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī, the well-known *Ta'aiyunī* leader, who utilised it in his own favour during his many encounters against the *Farā'iḍīs*. The relation between the *Farā'iḍīs* and the *Ta'aiyunīs* need not be discussed here. Suffice it to note that it is mainly through the opposition of the *Ta'aiyunīs* and on account of the *Baḥath* or public debates which frequently took place between the leaders of both the parties that the *Farā'iḍīs* bound themselves into a strong tie as a religious brotherhood.

The reason of the conflict of Ḥājī Shari'at Allāh with the Hindu *zamīndārs* is not far to seek. Taking advantage of the weakness of the Muslim masses in the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Ḥindu *zamindārs* imposed not only various restrictions on the Muslim peasentry, such as, prohibition on the slaughter of cows within the areas of their *zamīndārī*, but also imposed idolatrous taxes in addition to the lawful land revenues, such as levies for the cele-

bration of Hindu rites and for offering worship to the Hindu goddesses,[71] which, being idolatrous ceremonies, were strongly detested by the Muslims.

Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh being the exponent of Islamic revivalism, disapproved of these unjust and oppressive measures of the *zamindārs* on the Muslim peasantry, especially because of the encouragement to idolatry involved therein. Moreover, as the *Farā'iḍīs* accepted him as their leader and guide, they naturally looked upon him for the redress of their grievances. The Ḥājī, therefore, could not help standing against these oppressive and extortionate practices of the *zamindārs.* Hence, he directed his disciples to withhold the payment of the idolatrous cesses and encouraged them to slaughter cows, especially at the time of *'Īd al-Aḍ ā* (the festival of sacrifice), in which sacrificing cow is less expensive and most convenient in Bengal. It is through this process that the originally religious reform movement of the Ḥājī, gradually took a social platform. The conflict of the *Farā'iḍīs* with the Hindu *zamindārs* was, therefore, of a socio-economic nature rather than the result of fanaticism, as the opponents of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh would have us believe.

The *zamindārs* sharply reacted against this policy of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh; for, the nonpayment of idolatrous taxes went against their economic interest and the encouragement to the slaughter of cows wounded their feelings. The bitter resentment of the Hindu *zamindārs* against the *Farā'iḍī* policy of the nonpayment of *pujā* taxes has been testified by the Head of the Bengal Police in A.D. 1842,[72] and their reaction against the salughter of cows has been recorded by a Hindu gentleman of Dacca, who wrote to the editor of a local newspaper, *Darpan*, in A.D. 1837 that a number of "evil persons (*Javanas*) from among the followers of Sharī'at Allāh committed various rapacities to Bābu Tarinī Charan Majumdār of Patkanda village in the district of Faridpur, *i.e.*, they obstructed the worship of gods and gooddesses at his house by their evil actions such as the slaughter of cows." He further informs us that the

71 See James Wise: *Eastern Bengal*, p. 24.

72 See *Calcutta Review*, Calcutta, 1844, Vol. i, pp. 215-16.

Bābu did not deem it fit to meet the *Javanas* in an open fight and brought the matter before Robert Grote, the Magistrate of Faridpur, and that, after due investigation the Magistrate punished a few *Javanas* with imprisonment.[73]

The author of the letter draws a horrible picture of the activities of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh and his followers. In the first place, he reports that the Ḥājī being imbued with the intenton of establishng a kingdom or *bādshāhi* gathered together a party of about 12,000 weavers and Musalmans around him. He started a new religious doctrine or *shara'* and directed his followers to keep beards and to wear the *dhuti* without passing one end between the legs (*kachha khula*). His followers are also accused of obstructing the worship of Hindu gods and goddesses by entering the Hindu residences around with their cow-skinned belt put on their waist. Secondly, he accuses the *Farā'iḍis* of having demolished the twelve *Siva Lingas* which were erected by Diwān Mritunjay Rāy of Rajanagar in the district of Dacca. Thirdly, all the clerks (*Amlahs*) and pleaders (*Mukhtārs*) of the Faridpur Court, according to him, were disciples of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh. Hence, it was easy for the 12,000 united *Fara'iḍis* to prove or disprove any legal suit by means of false witnesses.[74]

The author of the letter compares the Ḥājī with Titu Mīr who, according to him, also wanted to establish a *badshāhi* or kingdom and who was crushed by the British government because of his assault on the life and property of the Hindus. Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh, in his opinion, should also be treated in the like manner. Even more

73 Brajendranāth Bandopādhāy: *Sambād Patre Sekāler Kathā*, Calcutta, B.S. 1342, Vol. III, pp. 311-12:

"আর শ্রুত হওয়া গেল সরিতুল্লার দলভুক্ত দুষ্ট জবনেরা ঐ ফরিদপুরের অন্তঃপাতি পাটকান্দা গ্রামের বাবু তারিণীচরণ মজুমদারের প্রতি নানা প্রকার দৌরাত্ম্য অর্থাৎ তাহার বাটিতে দেবদেবী পুজার আঘাত জন্মাইয়া গোহত্য ইত্যাদি কুকর্ম উপস্থিত করিলে মজুমদার বাবু জবনদিগের সহিত সম্মুখ যুদ্ধ অনুচিত বোধ করিয়া ঐ সকল দৌরাত্ম্য ফরিদপুরের মাজিষ্ট্রেট সাহেবের হুজরে জ্ঞাপন করিলে ঐ সাহেব বিচারপূর্বক কএকজন জবনকে কারাগারে বদ্ধ করিয়াছেন এবং এ বিষয়ের বিলক্ষণ অনুসন্ধান করিতেছেন।"

74 *Ibid.*, vol. III, p. 312.

so, because Titu Mīr did less than a hundredth part of what Sharī'at Allāh's party was doing.[75] "I am apprehensive," he says, "that the rapidity with which the party and power of the *Javana* Sharī'at Allāh, were increasing, (if he is allowed to continue), the Hindu religion will soon be destroyed which will bring also world destruction.[76] Hence, he appeals to the editor of *Darpan* and also to Mr. Grote to take steps for the disbandment of the Ḥājī's party in order to save the Hindu religion and the country from destruction.[77]

James Taylor (the Civil Surgeon of Dacca), another contemporary of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh writes in March, 1839, *i.e.*, just two years after, that the Ḥājī had "more than once been in the custody of the Police on account of occasioning affrays and distrubances in the town", probably in the town of Faridpur. He adds further that the Ḥājī "is at present under the ban of the Police, I believe, for exciting his disciples in the country to withhold the payment of revenue."[78] It is well-known that Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh forbade his disciples to participate in or subscribe to the celebration of Hindu *pujās*, which, according to him, violated the doctrine of *tawḥid* (*i.e.*, monotheism as interpreted by the Ḥājī). Taylor's reference to "withholding the payment of revenues" may relate to the idolatrous taxes, such as *Kāli Vritti* (tax for the *Kāli pujā*) and *Durgā Vritti* (tax for the *Durgā pujā*). For, there is no evidence to show that the Ḥājī or his successors had ever opposed the payment of the lawful land revenues. This view is corroborated by the report of the Head of the Bengal Police dated A.D. 1842.[79]

It may be noted further that about A.D. 1837, Dudu Miyān (son of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh) had returned from Makkah and begun to take active interest in organising the *Fara'iḍis* into a solid block and in training them in the art of affray-fighting. In A.D.

75 Borajendranāth Bandspādhāy Samhād Patre Sekāler Katha, Calcutta, B. S. 1342, Vol. III, pp. 311-12:

"আমি বোধ করি সরিতুল্লা যবন যে প্রকার দলবদ্ধ হইয়া উত্তর উত্তর প্রবল হইতেছে অল্প দিনের মধ্যে হিন্দু ধর্ম লোপ হইয়া অকালে প্রলয় হইবেক।"

77 *ibid:*

78 James Taylor: *Topography*, *op. cit.*, p. 250.

79 See *Calcutta Review*, Vol. I, p. 215 f.

1838, Dudu Miyān was accused by the Police of abetting the plunder of several houses.[80]

The above evidences show that towards the end of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh's life, the *Fara'iḍi* peasantry were coming increasingly into conflict with the Hindu *zamindārs*, probably due to the initiative of Dudu Miyān in upholding the rights of the *Fara'iḍis*. But, the violent fighting and large scale affrays, which were to characterise their mutual relations a few years later under the leadership of Dudu Miyān, did not take place during the Ḥājī's life time. If anything of a serious nature had occured before the Ḥājī's death, it must have found a prominent place in the Police reports of A.D. 1838, 1842 and 1843.[81] Even the accusation of the Police against Dudu Miyān in A.D. 1838, does not appear to have sufficient grounds, as the case fell through when he was tried before the law court.[82]

The Nature of Haji Shari'at Allah's Movement

Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh's conflict with the Hindu *zamindārs* and the cognisance of his activities by the Police, however, should not lead us to think that he ever took the role of a political leader or he ever meddled in politics against the established government of the country. The writings of Wise and Beveridge categorically negate any such proposition. Wise describes the Ḥājī's movement as "devoid of any political colour" and says that after the Nayabari incident (which took place in April, 1831), the Ḥājī "acted with great prudence and caution, rarely assuming any other character than that of a religious reformer.[83] Beveridge says[84]:

"It does not appear, however, that the *Ferazis* share the dangerous political views of the *Wahhabis*, or that their revolutionary views extend beyond disputing their landlords' claim for rent. Hindu *zamindārs* and alarmists generally are fond of representing the *Ferazis* as politically dangerous, but, I think, without sufficient reason.

80 James Wise: *Eastern Bengal*, p. 25.

81 See *ibid.*, and *Calcutta Review*. vol. i, p. 215 f.

82 See James Wise: *Eastern Bengal*, p. 25.

83 *Ibid.* p. 22.

84 H. Beveridge: *District of Bakerganj*, *op. cit.*, p. 225.

No doubt, they are more vigorous and less tractable than ordinary Mahomedans; but this need not be a disadvantage in their character."

The above evidence suggests that the Ḥājī acted with prudence and always remained a religious reformer. So, if he was put under Police custody, it was not due to his anti-state activities but to his opposition to the oppressive and illegal taxes levied by the *zamīndārs* on the helpless peasantry. Had he betrayed any anti-state activity, he must have been dealt with severely by the British government, as was done in the case of his contemporary Titu Mīr.[85] Thus, far from being of a political nature, the reform movement of the Ḥājī was out and out religious in character.

Character of Haji Shari'at Allah :

Like Titu Mīr, Ḥājī Shari'at Allāh was born of an obscure family, and both alike came from the lower strata of the Muslim society ; but unlike the former, the Ḥājī was profoundly learned in Islamic sciences and had the prudence of keeping his reform movement above politics. He was a man of struggle and keen foresight and knew well how to steer his movement clean through political intrigues and temptation. This is one of the main reasons why the *Farā'iḍī* movement could not only survive him but flourish and continue down to the present day.

Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh had a strong but amiable personality. According to James Wise, he was a man of middle height, of fair complexion, and wore a long and handsome beard.[86] He possessed a stout and robust health, and usually covered his head with "a voluminous turban."[87] According to the popular tradition, his appearance was beautiful and awe-striking at the same time, which reflected well the strength of his personality and the softness of his heart. Wise observes that it required "a sincere and sympathetic preacher" to rouse the apathetic and careless Bengali peasant to

85 See our article 'The Struggle of Titu Mīr, a re-examination," *J.A.S.P.*, Vol. iv, 1959, p. 113 f.

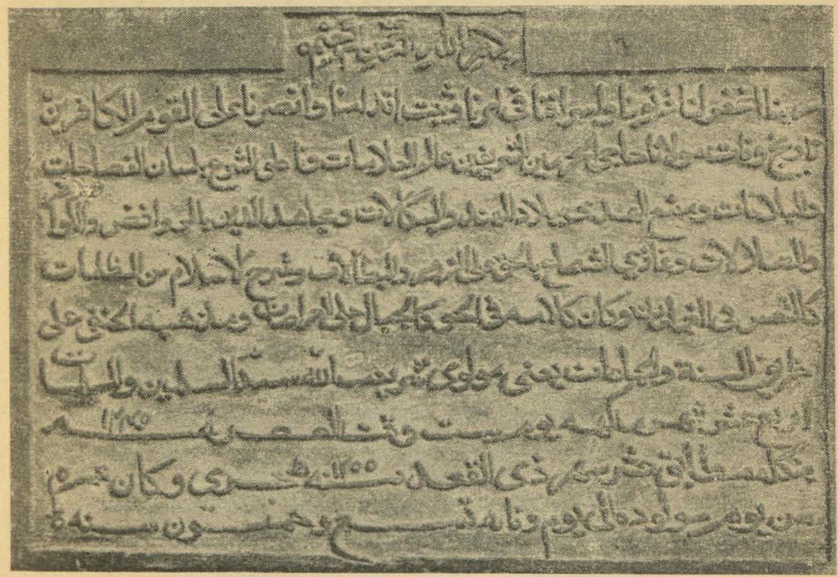
86 James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, p. 23.

87 Tradition current in the Family of the Ḥājī.

enthusiasm, and "no one ever appealed more strongly to the sympathies of the people than Shari'atullah" with his "blameless and exemplary life."[88] In Wise's opinion, the very fact of his rousing the Bengali Muslims to enthusiasm was even "more extraordinary" than his own rising from among the lower classes as the first preacher of puritanism amidst the swamps of Eastern Bengal.[89]

Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh died at his native village Shamail, in A.D. 1840, at the age of 59. He was buried at the backyard of his residence, which was, however, washed away by the river Arialkhan (Padma) not very long after his death, leaving to us only the tomb inscription, now preserved by the Asiatic Society of Pakistan at Dacca.[90]

88 James Wise: *Eastern Bengal*, p. 23.
89 *Ibid.*
90 See *J.A.S.P.*, Vol. III, p. 187 f.



Tomb Inscription of Ḥāji̇ Sharī'at Allāh (See *J. A. S. P.*, Vol. iii, 1958, pp. 187-198.)

CHAPTER IV

MUḤSIN AL-DĪN AḤMAD *alias* DUDU MIYĀN

(A. D. 1819—1862)

Muḥsin al-Dīn Aḥmad *alias* Dudu Miyān[1] was the only son of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh. He has been regarded by some as a co-founder of the *Farā'iḍī* movement.[2] He was born in A. D. 1819[3], at Mulfatganj,[4] then a thana in the Madaripur subdivision of Bakarganj district, which was transferred latter to the distirct of Faridpur. Although a less accomplished scholar than his father, he played a role in the history of the *Farā'iḍi* movement which was second to none, rather in certain respects he even excelled his father notably in organising the *Farā'iḍī* brotherhood into a well-knit and powerful society.[5]

The energetic and dashing career of Dudu Miyān from A. D. 1838 to 1857, struck awe and terror in the mind of his enemies and brought relief to his friends and followers. The popular imagination was replete with his adventurous exploits against the oppressive landlords and indigo-planters. The Court files and the police records

1 In the family circle, he was fondly called "Dudu Miyān," by which name he became widely known in his later life. Wise called him "Dudhu Miyān" (*cf.* James Wise *: Eastern Bengal.* p. 24), others referred to him as "Dudu Mia" (*cf.* H. Beveridge : *District of Bakargonj, op. cit.*, p. 254), or "Dūdā Miyān" (*cf.* Karāmat 'Alī : *Ḥujjat*, p. 86). He is remembered by his followers as "Ustād Dudu Miyān" or "Mawlawī Dudu Miyān". They also called him simply "Ustād" or "Mawlawī". He usually signed his names as "Muḥsin al-Dīn Aḥmad *'urf* Dudu Miyān". This last spelling has also been adopted here.

2 For instance, H. Beveridge says, "He [Dudu Miyān] and his father, Shariyatollah, may be called the founders of the sect of Ferazis" (*District of Bakargonj*, p. 381).

3 James Wise : *Eastern Bengal,* p. 23 ; compare also *Trial of Dudu Miyān*, p. 4, in which his age has been recorded as 28 years on 30 July 1847.

4 H. Beveridge : *District of Bakargonj*, p. 254.

5 See *infra.*, Chapter viii.

were full of his accounts. Besides, several *Puthis* were written about his life and career. But a greater part of these materials have been swallowed up by the ravages of time. Still we are fortunate to have the complete proceedings of one of the most intriguing criminal cases instituted against him by the government in 1847,[1] and a good number of brief notices to be found here and there in the Court files, Police records, government reports, in the *Puthis* of Durr-i-Muḥammad, Nāzim al-Dīn and Wazīr 'Alī, and last but not least, in the writings of Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī of Jawnpur—which narrate some of the events connected with his colourful activities. In preparing the following sketch of his biography the materials have been drawn from these sources.

His Educational Career : Dudu Miyān's early life passed smoothly under the immediate care of his father, who made provisions for his education at home in Arabic and Persian languages. After he had acquired some proficiency in this elementary education, he was sent to Makkah[2] about the age of twelve for schooling.[3] According to tradition, while on his way to Makkah, he stopped for a few days at Calcutta and paid a visit to Titu Mīr, who was then residing in his country home in the district of 24 Parganahs.[4] As to his activities at Makkah and the duration of his stay there, we have no reliable source of information. The tradition, however, holds that he returned to Bengal after an absence of five years.[5] The government sources mention him for the first time in A.D. 1838, as disturbing the peace of Faridpur,[6] thus indicating that he had returned some-

1 *Trial of Dudu Miyān*, 354 pages, see *supra.*, Chapter I.

2 M. Hidayet Hosain : "Farā'iḍī," *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 1st ed., Vol. ii, p. 58 ; Wazir 'Alī : *Muslim Ratnahār*, p. 8 ; and James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, p. 23.

3 Tradition current in the family of Dudu Miyān.

4 A string of beads, preserved at Bahadurpur in the permanent residence of Dudu Miyān and his descendants, is identified by Bādshāh Miyān, the late head of the *Farā'iḍīs*, as a gift of Titu Mīr to Dudu Miyān, which was received by the latter at the time of his visit to the former on his way to Makkah. This string of beads has become a memorial and since Dudu Miyān's death, it has been inherited by the subsequent heads of the *Farā'iḍīs*.

5 Tradition current among the *Farā'iḍīs* of Chandpur.

6 James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, p. 25.

times earlier. Thereafter, Ḥaji S͟harī'at Allāh kept him in his company and gave lessons in his higher studies. This is all we know about his educational career.

As Organiser of Affray Parties: We have seen earlier that towards the end of Ḥājī S͟harī'at Allāh's life, he was increasingly coming in conflict with the Hindu *zamīndārs*. As a result, efficient affray fighters were needed in great numbers in order to resist the *zamīndārs* and their agents from oppressing the *Farā'iḍi* peasantry. The Ḥājī is, therefore, said to have given the charge of collecting clubmen to one of his influential lieutenants, namely Jalāl al-Dīn Mullāh of Faridpur.[1] On his return from Makkah, Dudu Miyān joined hands with Jalāl al-Dīn and organised regular exercises for clubmanship. In course of a short time, he raised a sizeable volunteer corps of clubmen and trained them into skilful fighters. The above facts will explain why Dudu Miyān was charged by the police in A. D. 1838 with abetting the plunder of several houses.[2] The remark of James Taylor that Ḥājī S͟harī'at Allāh was put under the ban of the police in A.D. 1839[3], further indicates that the affray party of Dudu Miyān had at that time gained considerable strength. Endowed with great physical energy and a keen sense of diplomacy, Dudu Miyān appears to have proved more capable in this practical field than in the field of acquisition of theoretical knowledge, as will be seen in the following pages and in a subsequenec chapter on social reforms.

As Head of the Farā'iḍī Movement: When Ḥājī S͟harī'at Allāh died in A.D. 1840 the *Farā'iḍīs* met together and acclaimed Dudu Miyān as their "Ustād" or head.[4] This election proved a turning point in the life of Dudu Miyān, and no less in the history of the *Farā'iḍī* movement. On his assumption of leadership, the indomitable spirit of Dudu Miyān, which was so long held in sway by the prudent

1 Tradition current in the families of Ḥājī S͟harī'at Allāh and Jalāl al-Dīn Mullāh.

2 James Wise: *Eastern Bengal*, p. 25.

3 James Taylor: *Topography*, p. 250.

4 J. E. Gastrell: *Jessore, Fureedpore and Backergunge*, p. 36, No. 151. The "Ustad" literally means "teacher", which was adopted by the *Farā'iḍīs* as the official title of their Head.

restrain of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh, eagerly sought an outlet for expression. He thought that the high-handed oppression of the *zamīndārs* on the *Farā'iḍī* peasantry, demanded quick and firm action. This was especially the case in rural Bengal where the government administration was less effective than the whimsical authority of the *zamīndārs.*

In A.D. 1841 and 1842, he led two campaigns against the *zamīndār* of Kanaipur, known as "Sikdārs" (Shiqdār), and of Faridpur, known as "Ghoshes," with the intention of bringing them to reasonable terms with the *Farā'iḍī* peasantry ; for, Dudu Miyān found no other course open to him or to his followers to make these oppressive *zamīndārs* see reason than by applying force. These campaigns proved a success, and helped him to mould a new policy which gave a newer outlook to the *Farā'iḍī* movement. These campaigns are discussed below.

The *Farā'iḍīs* claim that the *Sikdārs* and the Ghoshes had formed a league against the *Farā'iḍī* movement. In their attempt to suppress the slaughter of cows (which the *Farā'idīs* openly practised), and to realise idolatrous cesses for the celebration of *Kālī Puja* and *Durgā Pujā* (which the *Farā'iḍīs* refused to pay on principle), the *zamīndārs* had devised a variety of intensely painful methods of physical torture.

James Wise says, "the *zamīndārs* again endeavoured to prevent their tenants from joining the *Farā'iḍi* movement, and, it is said, often punished and tortured the disobedient. A mode of torture, intensely painful, but which left no marks to implicate any one, is said to have been adopted on both sides. The beards of reculcitrant ryots were tied together and red chilli powder given as snuff. Coercion, however, failed, and the landlords did little to check the spread of the revival".[1]

The *Farā'iḍīs* mention a variety of torture to which they were subjected by these *zamīndārs* besides the above "chilli powder snuff," such as, (i) severe flogging, (ii) breaking red-ants' nest on the bare body, (iii) throwing chest-deep into a well of rubbish especially de-

1 James Wise : *Eastern Bengal,* p. 24.

vised for the purpose, and (iv) shutting up such insects as grass-hopper and white ant on the navel under the cover of a bowl, after forcing the victim lie down on his back.[1] When these methods failed to turn the *Ferā'idīs* from their adherence to Dudu Miyān, they imposed the infamous beard-tax, which was invented earlier by the Hindu *zamīndārs* of 24 Parganahs to punish the followers of Titu Mīr.[2] The frequent occurence of torture proved too much for the impetuous Dudu Miyān to put up with silently.

His Campaign against the Sikdār of Kanaipur: In A. D. 1841,[3] Dudu Miyān and Jalāl al-Dīn Mullāh proceeded to Kanaipur at the head of a few hundred clubmen and encamped within the sight of the landlord's palace.[4] Dudu Miyan then held out to the *zamīndār* the threat of taking away every brick of the palace if he did not come to terms. The *Sikdār* was frightened, and finding no way out, conceded to his stipulations. It was agreed that physical torture on the *Farā'iḍīs* would cease and extortion of illegal and idolatrous taxes from them would stop forth with.[5]

His Campaign against the Ghosh of Faridpur: Emboldened by his easy victory over the *Sikdār*, Dudu Miyān led another campaign against the powerful Ghosh family of Faridpur in the earlier part of A.D. 1842.[6] The Police report describes the incidents as follows:

> "One of the cases of attack at night was of a serious nature. A body, stated at no less than 800 Ferazees, the raieuts (ryots)

1 Tradition current among the *Farā'iḍīs* of Chandpur and Faridpur.

2 See Biharilal Sarkar: *Titu Mīr*, p. 14; also, W.W. Hunter: *Indian Musalmans*, p. 45, foot note 2. Hunter says Krishna Chandra Rai "levied a capitation tax, five shillings on each of his peasants who had embraced the new faith" of Titu Mīr; and Biharilal says that the "beard-tax" was charged at the rate of two-and-half rupees. It may be noted that keeping beards was made compulsory by both Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh and Titu Mīr. According to the *Farā'iḍīs*, they were charged by the Ḥindu *zamīndārs* at the rate of two-and-half rupees.

3 James Wise: *Eastern Bengal*, p. 25.

4 Among the *Farā'iḍīs* this Palace is known as "Ravan Kuti".

5 This detail is based on currnt tradition among the *Farā'iḍīs*, but is supported by what follows next.

6 See, *Calcutta Review*, vol. i, (1844), pp. 215-216; extract from Mr. Dempier's report of 1842, in the Art. "Rural Population of Bengal".

of one Joynarain Ghosh collected together, attacked his *bareh* [residence], plundered it of every thing, and carried off his brother Muddan Narain Ghosh".[1]

According to the *Farā'iḍī* sources Madan Ghosh was killed and buried at the bottom of river Padma.[2] Wazir 'Ali says :[3]

"From the year B.S. 1227,
The Hindus bore enmity against the Muslims;
(And) oppressed the poor (Muslims) in very many ways,
(By) restraining the barber (from serving them),
(and) by tying their beards together.
In this way many a Muslim were oppressed
(Until) they killed the *zamīndār*, Madan Ghosh
(And) disclosed openly that they have eaten him up.
Henceforth the Hindus were terror-striken,
(And) dared not resist the march of Islamisation
Which then proceeded without hindrance".

The Police report further adds, "This outrage shows the combination existing among this sect: they assembled from all quarters most suddenly and secretly and after the attack, dispersed in the same manner."[4] In the judgement of the Head of the Bengal Police,

1 *Ibid.*
2 Tradition current among the *Farā'iḍīs*.
3 Wazir 'Ali: *Muslim Ratnahār*, pp. 6—7 :

“বারশ’ সাত্তাইশ সন এই বাঙ্গালার ।
হিন্দুগণ শত্রু হ’ল মোসলেম উপর ।।
গরীব লোকেরে কত মত সাজা দিত ।
নাপীত বন্ধ দাঁড়ি বাঁধি সাজা দেলাইত ।।
এই মত সাজা কত মোসলমান পাইল ।
মদন ঘোষ জমিদারে মারিয়া ফেলিল ।।
প্রকাশ করিয়া দিল খেয়েছি মদন ঘোষে ।
সেই হইতে হিন্দুগণ পড়িল তরাশে ।।
ইসলামিতে বাধা দিতে না উঠিল মন ।
সানন্দে এসলামি চলে বাড়িয়া তখন ।।”

4 *Calcutta Review*, Vol I, *op. cit.*, pp. 215-16.

this attack was motivated by a desire for revenge and not for plunder. He says: "They were not instigated by a desire of plunder, but of revenge for the oppression and extortion practised on them by this zamīndār, and if a tenth part of what they say, after their conviction, stated to me in a petition extenuating their conduct, was true, I am only surprised that a much more serious and general disturbance did not occur . . . I have no doubt, however, of the general truth of the statements, and the zamīndārs appear to have done everything which could degrade these men their religion and their females."[1]

He then cautioned the Magistrate of the district in the following words: "The Magistrate must keep a strict watch, not only over these people, but also over their Zamīndārs, particularly if Hindoos, as the latter are very apt to resent the non-payment of these men of puja expenses, etc., which they consider encouraging idolatry, by the very gross ill-treatment. In fact, the Ferazees consider the payment of rent at all, especially to an infidel, as opposed to the word of God, and where a zamīndār cares not for his raieuts (ryots) or for any thing beyond extorting all he can from them by any means, a reaction on the part of a fanatical and ill-treated body of men must be expected."[2]

On this incident the Magistrate arrested 117 persons, of whom 106 were tried before the Sessions, and finally 22 of them received 7 years' terms of rigorous imprisonment.[3] According to current tradition, Dudu Miyān was also one of the accused, but was released by the Sessions Judge for lack of evidence against him.[4]

These initial victories of Dudu Miyān captured the imagination of the masses, and had far-reaching influence on the future course of the *Farā'iḍī* movement. In the first place, the prestige of Dudu Miyān rose high in the esteem of the down-trodden peasantry, who hailed him as their saviour, and as the champion of their cause. As a result, his name, in the language of James Wise, became "a house-

1 *Calcutta Review*, Vol. i, *op. cit.*, pp. 215-16.

2 *Ibid.*

3 *Ibid.*

4 Tradition current in the family of Dudu Miyān.

hold word throughout the districts of Faridpur, Pubna, Bakarganj, Dacca and Noakhali." [1] Secondly, it gave an added impetus to the *Farā'iḍī* movement and drew within its fold those Muslims who had so far stood aloof for fear of the oppression of the *zamīndārs.* It is, therefore, not insignificant that the Bengal Police found Dudu Miyān in A,D. 1843, as the leader of about 80,000 followers "who asserted complete equality among themselves, looked upon the cause of each as that of the whole sect".[2]

Reaction of the Zamīndārs : The *zamīndārs* felt grave apprehension at the growing power of the *Farā'iḍī* movement and as a measure of safety began to foment the suspicion of the English administrators and indigo-planters. By their instigation Mr. Andrew Anderson Dunlop an influential indigo-planter, who had a factory at Madaripur,[3] became an avowed enemy of Dudu Miyān. James Wise says that Mr. Dunlop "several times succeeded in causing him to be arrested and tried for illegal actions". James Wise further informs us that Dudu Miyān was tried for trespass and illegal action in A.D. 1844, and for abduction and plunder in A.D. 1846. But on both these occasions he was acquitted for lack of evidence.[4] The *Farā'iḍīs*, who are often boastful of their exploits against the oppressive *zamīndārs*,[5] do not mention any campaign of Dudu Miyān against indigo planters before A.D. 1846, when they attacked the Brahman *Gomāshtah* of Mr. Dunlop. The following Statement of James Wise indicates that the *zamīndārs* and the indigo-planters had made a common cause against Dudu Miyān, apparently induced by their

1 James Wise: *Eastern Bengal*, p. 23.

2 W. W. Hunter: *Indian Musalmans*, p. 100.

3 H. Beveridge: *District of Bakargonj, op cit.*, p. 339.

4 James Wise: *Eastern Bengal*, p. 25. In course of his trial in 1847 Dudu Miyan submitted to the Court that Mr. Dunlop never ceased to show enmity towards him and tried to implicate him falsely in various criminal cases since B.S. 1245/A.D. 1839-1840 (*Trial of Dudu Miyān*, p. 47).

5 For instance, the *Calcutta Review* of A.D. 1847, notices the *Farā'iḍis* in the following words: "The Ferazi too can fight, and single exception to the general rule, can boast of it afterwards to the official without scruple" (*cf.* Vol. vii, 1847, p. 199). For an instance of Dudu Miyān's boasting in the Court in A.D. 1857, see, James Wise: *Eastern Bengal*, p. 25.

common vested interest which was in danger by the activities of Dudu Miyān. Wise says, "During his [Dudu Miyān's] father's life time the sect had opposed or come in contact with the law of the land; and the high-handed actions of the son united *zamīndārs* and indigo-planters against him".[1] In 1847, the Government Prosecutor of Faridpur admitted that Mr. Dunlop and the Boboos having resisted the introduction of *Farā'iḍī* doctrines among their ryots were brought into collision with Dudu Miyān.[2]

The propaganda of the *zamīndārs* and indigo-planters against Dudu Miyān and his followers, found ready ears at Calcutta which is evident from the following notice of the *Calcutta Review* in A.D. 1847. It reads: "The Ferazis are the same men who under Titu Mīr gave the Government such trouble in Baraset district some fourteen years ago. They are at present headed by one Dudu Miyān and abound in the districts of Dacca, Faridpore and Bakargonge... The chief tenets of these worthies are that murder and perjury on behalf of the sect, are not only pardonable but praiseworthy...If any disturbance now takes place in Lower Bengal, it will be through the instrumentality of the Ferazis, and though a company of sepoys might put them down, yet it would not be without a considerable effusion of blood."[3]

J.E. Gastrell, Deputy Surveyor General and Superintendent of Revenue Surveys, was a contemporary of Dudu Miyān, and was engaged in the survey of Jessore, Faridpur and Bakarganj from A.D. 1856 to A.D. 1862.[4] As such, he is expected to have authentic information about the *Farā'iḍī* leader. But his following statement about Dudu Miyān is hardly corroborated by the evidence available

1 James Wise: *Eastern Bengal*, p. 24.

2 *Trial of Dudu Miyān*, p. 3.

3 *Calcutta Review*, Vol. vii, Jan.-June, 1847, p. 199: *Art* "Indigo in Lower Bengal." It would appear from the language of the quotation that this Jan.-June edition of *Calcutta Review* went to the Press before the incident of the attack of the *Farā'iḍīs* on the indigo factory of Mr. A. Dunlop in December, 1846 at Panch Char in the Madaripur subdivision. Otherwise, such a major attack on a European firm could not have been overlooked.

4 J. E. Gastrell: *Jessore, Fureedpore and Backergunge*, front page and p. 46.

from other sources. He says: "this man is said to have on several occasions abused the trust placed in him by his followers, and to have purchased an estate with the money placed in his hands for religious purposes. He then became a great tyrant, and complaints against him become numerous. In one of these he was tried, convicted and imprisoned".[1]

He adds further: "In 1857 he was removed to Calcutta, and kept in safe custody there until the close of the great mutiny".[2]

In the first place we know, on the authority of James Wise and Police report that Dudu Miyān was never convicted though he was accused and tried several times before law courts; and that he was never imprisoned prior to his arrest in A.D. 1857 and removal to Calcutta which was rather for political reasons. About this last trial, James Wise says that in 1857 Dudhu Miyān was thrown into prison and the story goes that he would have been released, if he had not boasted that fifty thousand men would answer to his summons, and march withersoever he ordered them.[3] Secondly about the source of his information, Gastrell himself says, "the following description of the origin of this [*Farā'iḍī*] sect was given to me at Fureedpore by one of its members."[4] Now, it is not expected that a follower of Dudu Miyān would spread such blemish against his own leader, if he is not, for some reason or other, disaffected. On the other hand, James Wise testifies that the *Farā'iḍīs* supported him to the last although at one time a few had seceded, but for quite different reasons, as will be seen in the following quotation. James Wise says, "Several actions of their *Pir* [Dudu Miyān] must have been disapproved of by many of his followers, as for instance when he forcibly carried off a Brahmani girl and made her his 'nikah' wife; but even this violent act did not cause them to desert him. On the contrary, they believed in him to the last, and liberally spent their hard earned savings in promoting the interest of the sect. At one time a few disciples seceded. They had been to Makkah and ascer-

1 J. E. Gastrell: *Jessore, Fureedpore and Backergunge*, p. 36, No. 151.
2 *Ibid.*
3 James Wise: *Eastern Bengal*, p. 25.
4 J. E. Gastrell: *Jessore, Fureedpore and Backergunge*, p. 36, No. 151.

tained that the teaching of Mawlawi Karāmat 'Ali was orthodox, that of their own spiritual chief was *Wahabi* in tendency and heterodox".[1]

Nevertheless, the erroneous view of Gastrell, coming as it does from a responsible person, carried great influence and eventually misled many including W.W. Hunter.[2] Thus, the enemies of Dudu Miyān were successful to a great extent in their attempt to influence the English official class against the *Farā'iḍi* leader.

It appears from the circumstantial evidence, as well as from the *Farā'iḍī* sources that after the incidents of A.D. 1841 and 1842, the *zamīndārs* were afraid of disturbing the peace of the *Farā'iḍis* by any direct violent means, although they indulged in hostile propaganda. Kāli Prasād Kanjhi Lāl, the Brahman *gomashtah* of Mr. Dunlop, who was in charge of Dunlop's indigo-factory of Panch Char in the Thana of Mulfatganj, was the only person remained to be dealt with. According to the *Farā'iḍī* sources, he was deadly against Dudu Miyān and under the protection of his English master continued to perpetrate oppression on the *Farā'iḍīs*.[3] The *Farā'iḍīs* hold that Kāli Prasad used to pose himself as a little *zamīndār* and oppressed the sowers of indigo, a great many of whom were *Farā'iḍīs*. He forced them to plant indigo on their best rice-lands for only a nominal remuneration and punished the reculcitrant with "chilli powder snuff" and "beard-tax."[4] Having settled the matters with the *zamīndārs*, Dudu Miyān turned his attention to this notorious *gumashtah* and directed one of his influential disciples of Narayanganj subdivision, namely Qādir Bakhsh Jān, to lead a campaign against him while Dudu Miyān himself proceeded to Paragram with

1 James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, pp. 25-26.

2 In the *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Hunter repeats the views of Gastrell almost verbatim. He says, "This man appears to have abused the implicit confidence reposed in him. He was charged with having applied the subscription to his own use and with many tyrannical acts. On more than one occasion he was sentenced to terms of imprisonment by the British Courts" (vol. iv, p. 399).

3 See, H. Beveridge : *District of Bakargonj*, *op. cit.*, p. 399 and Wazir 'Alī : *Muslim Ratnahār*, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

4 Tradition current among the *Farā'iḍīs*.

the Magistrate on buffalo hunting.[1] James Wise describes the incident as follows:[2] "On the 5th of December 1846, a large body of armed men attacked and burned to the ground the factory of Panch Char. After pillaging the adjoining village[3] they departed, taking with them the Brahman *Gomashtah*, who was afterwards cruelly murdered in the Bakargonj district."

The account of Beveridge agrees with Wise's description and the former adds on the basis of a letter of the Magistrate, that it is said that the body (of Kanjhi Lal) was cut in pieces and thrown into the sea ; hence the proverbial expression of making a Kanjhi Lall of one's enemy.[4]

In the opinion of James Wise, this attack was motivated by Dudu Miyān's desire of taking revenge against Mr. Dunlop. He does not mention the immediate cause of attack ; but points out in a general way that Mr. Dunlop had enmity with Dudu Miyān and the latter bent upon revenge easily found willing agents to execute his order.[5] We have, however, come to know from the proceedings of Dudu Miyān's trial in this case that on 30 Bhadun B.S. 1253, i.e., just 2 months and 20 days before the incident of Panch Char (which took place on Saturday, 21 Aghun, 1253) another similar incident had occurred at Bahadurpur at which Mr. Dunlop's *gomashtahs* and Hindu Baboos of Panch Char attacked the residence of Dudu Miyān with 700 or 800 armed men. According to Dudu Miyān's statement before the Sessions Judge, "they broke the front door and murdered four watchmen and severely wounded others and plundered about one and a half lakh rupees (1,50,000) in cash and property, concealed the bodies of the slain and presented the wounded persons as part of an unlawful assemblage" to the police. The police officer sent up these wounded men to the Magistrate for prosecution, one of whom Amīruddīn succumbed to his wounds

1 *Trial of Dudu Miyān*, p. 48.

2 James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, p. 25. For details, see numerous statements in the *Trial of Dudu Miyān*.

3 The name of this village was Shimuliya (see, *infra.*)

4 H. Beveridge : *District of Bakargonj*, p. 340.

5 James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, p. 25.

and died in the hospital. The Magistrate took no interest in the case. But when on the complaint of Mr. Dunlop's party the *Darogah* (police officer) came to Bahadurpur to investigate into the matter of unlawful assemblage on the part of Dudu Miyān's men, the latter complains that the other party bribed the *Darogah*, kidnapped Dudu Miyān, carried him to Panch Char, kept him confined for one night and two days for the purpose of preventing him from recording his statement before the *Darogah*. In the report of his investigation the *Darogah*, who was a Hindu and had natural sympathies with the Hindu Baboos, marked Dudu Miyān absent. Dudu Miyān says that after securing his release from Panch Char he proceeded to Faridpur town and submitted a petition to the Magistrate which the British Magistrate had the pleasure to reject outright. The Magistrate rather advised him to agree to a compromise and recording a proceeding to that effect asked Dudu Miyān to sign it. But on the latter's repeated refusal the Magistrate agreed to investigate the case and ordered the *Darogah* of Sibchar to repair the roads.[1]

In this process while Dudu Miyān kept on attending before the Magistrate at Dacca and Faridpur and pressing for the investigation, about two and half months were gone. On 19 Aghun 1253, just two days before the Panch Char incident, the Magistrate taking some others with him went on hunting wild buffalo at Paragram from Dacca. At Paragram, he also set up his court in a tent where Dudu Miyān and other complainants were to keep in waiting. In fact, Dudu Miyān was kept waiting there on the orders of the Magistrate since 16 Aghun. On 20 Aghun, the Magisterate bagged a buffalo and returned to Dacca keeping Dudu Miyān and others waiting there at the court with words that he would come back soon and take up their cases. Dudu Miyān remained in attendance till afternoon of 21 Aghun (in the early morning of which day the Panch Char incident took place), but as the Magistrate did not return, Dudu Miyān took leave of the subordinate officers of the court and proceeded to Dacca arriving there in the morning of 22 Aghun by boat. As he approached the residence of the Magistrate, the latter got angry because, as Dudu Miyān says, some of the ladies became

1 *Trial of Dudu Miyān*, pp. 47-48. The *Darogah* who investigated the case was Mirtunjoy Ghose (*ibid.*, p. 14).

frightened at the sight of his beard. The Magistrate ordered him to go to Paragram and keep in waiting there for the hearing of his petition. So he returned to Paragram where the Magistrate also arrived on 23 Aghun. On the face of the matter, therefore, Dudu Miyān had little scope to meddle in an affair which took place at Panch Char, at a distance of one and half days journey by boat from Paragram, in the morning of 21 Aghun. At any rate, it was on the 23 Aghun that Dunlop submitted his complaint against Dudu Miyān and his followers to the Magistrate.[1] In this case the Magistrate took prompt action. Edward de Latour testifies that the Magistrate dined with Mr. Dunlop in the tent, discussed the matter with him and after taking the deposition of some of his own creatures committed Dudu Miyān to the Sessions.[2]

Mr. De Latour attributed the attack to the motive of retaliation against Dunlop's attack on Dudu Miyān's residence.[3] In this H. Beveridge also agrees with him and adds that the reason for kidnapping Kanjhi Lāl was that the *Farā'idī* peasantry considered him as oppressive towards them.[4] It appears from the *Farā'idī* sources that the grievances of the peasantry against Kanjhi Lāl were in no way less serious than the grievances of Dudu Miyān against Mr. Dunlop. For example Wazīr 'Alī says : [5]

"In the Panch Char of Faridpur district,
There was one of the biggest indigo-factories of Bengal ;
In which Kāli Kājaliyā [Kanjhi Lāl] was the manager,
Who used to oppress the Muslims very much.
Qādir Bakhsh Jān, a discriple of the Miyān, one day,

1 *Trial of Dudu Miyān*, pp. 48 and 188-89.
2 *Parliamentary Papers*, Vol. xliv, 1861, *Indigo Commission ; Extract from Minute of Evidence*, p. 256, Reply No. 3917.
3 *Ibid.*
4 H. Beveridge : *District of Bakargonj*, p. 340.
5 Wazir 'Ali *Muslim Ratnahār*, p. 8 :

"ফরিদপুর জিলাধীন পাঁচ চড় পর।
বাঙ্গালার নীলকুঠী ছিল তথা বড়।।
কালী কাজলিয়া ছিল কর্মচারী বড়।
উৎপীড়ন করিত বর মোসলমান পর।।
একদিন মিঞার শিষ্য কাদের বক্স জান।
দুদু মিঞার এশারায় লিয়া সুবিদান।
বেইমানের তরে সবে মারিয়া ফেলিল।"

At the behest of Dudu Miyān, taking many (other) disciples with him,
(Led a campaign and) killed the infidel."

On this incident, Dudu Miyān and 63 of his followers were tried before the Sessions Judge of Faridpur, and were convicted in A.D. 1847. But on appeal to the *Niẓamat 'Adālat* of Calcutta all of them were acquitted.[1] It is said that a *Puthi* was written glorifying this event, which now appears to have been lost. Only a few lines could be recovered by us from the memory of an old *Farā'iḍī* of Tippera, which runs as follows ;[2]

"I am, the well-known Nā'jāi Shiqdār,
Giving this news in rhyme :
They (the *Farā'iḍīs*) were *dhuti* without passing one end between the legs,[3] sons of weavers, (and) true believers in Islām."

It continues :[4]

"It is Dudu Miyān who gave them their dress.
You go home ! believe me ! (and) give this message (to others) !

1 See *Trial of Dudu Miyān*, pp. Appendix xxxiii—xl ; James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, p. 25-H. Beveridge : *District of Bakarganj*, p. 340; and Wazir 'Ali : *Muslim Ratnahār*, p. 8.

"কবিতাতে বাঁধিয়া করিলাম প্রচার ।
সেই মুল্লকের ধন্যমান নাজাই সিকদার ।।
তারা কাঁছাখোলা, জোলার পোলা, খাটী মোসলমান ।"

(For reference, see *infra.*)

3 The term used "Kancha Khula," See, Also W. W. Hunter, ed. : *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, vol. iv, p. 399 ; and L.S.S. O'Malley : *Bengal., Bihar and Orissa*, p. 210.

"দুদু মিঞা নিয়া তাগো দিল বস্ত্রদান ।
তোমরা চল্যা ঘরে যাও, কবিলা নাও, কইও মুখের বাণী,
এই মত জান্যরে ভাই ওস্তাদের নিশানী ।।
ওস্তাদ দুদু মিঞা । দুদু মিঞা তাম দিয়া রাজ্য ভালা করে ।।
ছোট লোকের হাতে লাঠি ফাল ফারিয়া ফিরে ।
তাতে কমলা ছোছা পোক্‌কা মোছা ছদরী বাড়ী যায় ।
লালমনিয়ার পুকুরেতে হামেশা ঘুরায় ।।
তাতে ক'ব কত মষের মত কত ঘর পাড়া ।
দুদু মিঞা শিমুলিয়ার গাঁও কইরা দিল ছাড়া ।।"

The above two passages, apparently from a *puthi*, was recovered from the memory of Munshi 'Irfān al-Dīn of Bajarikhula in the interior of Sadar sub-division of Tippera. by the present writer, during a tour in 1958.

This you may take for granted as the sign of the *Ustād* (and his followers).

Ustād Dudu Miyān !

Dudu Miyān reforms the country by admonition.

The clubs in the hands of the lower classes go jumping on ;

There, Kamlā Chhochha, Pokkā Mochha,[1] go to Chawdhuri's residence,

(And) play with their sticks often near the tank of Lalmaniya.

Ah ! how much can I say about the houses in the hemlet !

Dudu Miyān made the village of Shimuliyā desolate".[2]

According to the prosecution story Dudū Miyān was guilty of "counselling, instigating, procuring and by direct and special orders causing a large body of men—all or chiefly belonging to the sect of Hadjees Ferazees[3]—armed with deadly weapons riotiously to attack and forcibly to break into the factory of Mr. Andrew Anderson Dunlop" and various shops and houses of Hindu Baboos situated in the village of Panch Char as well as the Kutcherry of Mr. Dunlop and the house of Hadanullah at Kharra Kandi, and to rob and plunder property valued at more or less Rs. 27,000, to burn down the above factory and Kutcherry of Mr. Dunlop and about 40 thatched houses belonging to the Baboos, to cause the wounding of a few persons and to carry off Kali Prasād Kunjhilāl, the *gamoshtah* of Mr. Dunlop, who "has not since been seen or heard of by his friends".[4] Although it was emphatically stated in the charge-sheet that in course of the attrocities many lives were exposed to imminent danger, it was conceded at the same time that by God's grace, all

1 Kamlā Chhochha and Pokkā Mochha appear to be fond names of two trainers in clubmanship, which was, at that time, very important in fighting country affrays.

2 Shimuliya was a village in the vicinity of the indigo factory of Mr. Dunlop at Parch Char, in which the workers of the factory and the clubmen (*Latiyals*) of Mr. Dunlop, were housed. After raizing the indigo factory to the ground, the *Farā'idīs* sacked this village as described above.

3 It is interesting to note that according to the prosecution story the party that attacked Panch Char factory included also native Christians (*cf.*, *Trial of Dudu Miyān*, p. 65.

Trial of Dudu Miyān, pp. 1—2 and 313.

lives were miraculously saved.[1] Asked to state if there was any immediate cause for this outrage. Mr. Dunlop deposed that in the previous indigo-cutting season Dudu Miyān "had many times attempted through his people to prevent my people cutting our indigo plant," whereupon he applied to the Magistrate for protection." Beyond that," he said, "I do not recollect anything in particular."[2]

Since the earlier outrage on Dudu Miyān's residence by Dunlop's men could not be cited by the prosecution, Barun Chunder Roy, Mohurrir of the Faujdari Court tried to implicate Dudu Miyān by submitting to the Sessions Judge that in the first place, there was an assemblage of great many people at Mahtabpur near Paragram, a few days before the occurrence of the Panch Char incident in which Dudu Miyān was present and ordered them to carry on this outrage and that Zahid Khan was the leader of the assemblage as well as of the outrage. Secondly, on the day before the incident, a riotous multitude assembled at night in the house of Dudu Miyān at Bahadurpur who came out under the cover of darkness from there to Panch Char and committed the outrage in the morning[3] Thirdly, "it is a principle of the Miyān and his followers that they do not consider it a sin to commit outrage against those who do not embrace the doctrines of the Miyān."[4] Fourthly, Mr. Dunlop stated that the outrage committed "has been universally attributed" to the orders of Dudu Miyān.[5] Out of 67 prosecution witnesses only one person deposed "that the people of Bahadurpur did not unite and attack the factory," but those who committed the outrage came from a distance." He, however, added that after the occurrence he heard from others "that they had gathered together on the previous night at Bahadurpur."[6]

According to the *Farā'iḍī* tradition, the people of Bahadurpur or Faridpur district took no part in this attack. Even they were hardly in the know of it. The party was organised by Qādir Ba<u>kh</u><u>sh</u>

1 *Trial of Dudu Miyān*, pp. 1—2 and 66—67.

2 *Ibid.*, Appendix p.i.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 3.

4 *Ibid.*

5 *Ibid.*, p. 4.

6 *Ibid.*, Appendix p. i.

Jān at Narayānganj, a subdivision in the district of Dacca, at the instance of a secret emissary of Dudu Miyān, From Narayanganj the party proceeded at night direct to Panch Char in small groups walking on foot and carrying not a single stick in their hands. After they had crossed the river Padma at some point not far from Panch Char, they were joined by another small party who on previous instructions kept a ready stock of sticks, spears, axes etc., as required for the whole party. From here again breaking up into small groups, they advanced to the factory arriving there almost simultaneously at the break of the dawn. Having accomplished their job they dispersed, broke up in small groups, threw away the sticks and walking willy nilly like ordinary people returned direct to Narayanganj.[1]

The co-relatives of the incident cited by the prosecution being all fictitious, the police had to produce many forged documents in support of the allegations. But the *Darogah,* Mr. Dunlop and Hindu Baboos were so much baffled by the ingenious tact of Dudu Miyān that some of these documents could not be prepared and submitted to the court within one or two weeks of the date of occurrence of the incident[1]. Moreover, as the government prosecutor and the police were unable to get into the heart of the matter, Dudu Miyān and the defence witnesses had little difficulty in disproving the prosecution story altogether. By his forceful argumentation Dudu Miyān even succeeded to make the whole case including the occurrence of the outrage itself, appear fictitious.[2]

On the basis of the evidence of prosecution witnesses and the *Fatwa* of the Law Officer Mawlawi 'Abd al-Wahid, the Sessions Judge of Dacca (i. e., Judge of the Faridpur Sessions Court[3]) Henry Swetenham convicted Dudu Miyān and 48 of his followers and

1 Tradition current among the *Fara'iḍīs* of Faridpur, Narayanganj and Chandpur.

2 *Trial of Dudu Mīyān*, p. 48.

3 See "A Police Report of the Zilah Dacca-Jalalpur, dated A. 1799C" contributed by the present writer (J. *P. H. S.*, vol. vii. part I, 1969, p. 24 f. for the history of the bifurcation of Dacca, Faridpur and Bakarganj which in earlier times formed one single district.

sentenced them to different terms of imprisonment. But as his power did not cover the heavy sentences pronounced the whole case was sent up to the Calcutta Sudder Nizamut Adalut for confirmation and final orders in August, 1847.[1] The Nizamut Court being entirely dissatisfied with the evidence against the prisoners set aside the judgment of the Sessions Judge on 23 September, 1847, with the remark that the prosecution story was in part utterly incredible and in part far from trustworthy and conclusive. It was further observed that the evidence "adduced for this prosecution bears a strong resemblance to that adduced in the case tried by the Additional Sessions Judge of Dacca Mr. Longhnan in July, 1841, when the the prisoner and many of his disciples were tried and acquitted.[2]

This defeat of the prosecution proved a crushing below to Mr. Dunlop and Hindu Baboos. Dudu Miyān's followers hailed it as a grand victory for the oppressed peasantry and sang "দদু মিঞা তাম দিয়া রাজ্য ভালা করে"[3] Edward de Latour (who was appointed Joint Magistrate and Deputy Collector of Faridpur in 1847, when the trial of Dudu Miyān was in progress) though considered this attack on Dunlop's factory as a case of retaliation, did not put the blame as much on Dudu Miyān as on the unprincipled and oppressive Mr. Dunlop and the "British born Magistrate" who acted in collusion with him. "It appears to my mind," he says, "to be utterly repugnant to every sense of duty, to be disgraceful to the character of a British Judge; it utterly destroys every feeling of confidence in our courts in the minds of the natives; for what native will bring forward his case when he sees under his own immediate eye-sight such instances of moral corruption in a British magistracy."[4] This corruption and ineffectiveness of the British court and disorganised state of administration in Faridpur and neighbouring districts[5] were evidently responsible for the then growing popularity of the *Fara'idi khilāfat* systsm.[6]

1 *Trial of Dudu Miyān*, pp. 311-13 and Appendix pp. xxvii, xxviii-xxxiii.
2 *Ibid.*, Appendix p. xxxiii.
3 i. e Dudu Miyān reform the land by admonition !
4 *Parliamentary Papers*, vol xliv, 1861, *Indigo Commission. Extract from the minutes of Evidence*, p. 265, Reply No. 3918.
5 See *ibid.*, for details.
6 See *infra*, chapter viii.

Dudu Miyān's successful campaign against Kāli Prasād Kānjhi Lāl removed the last hurdle from his path. Henceforward, the *Fara' idis* could walk with their heads high without fear of being molested by the *zamīndārs* and the indigo planters or by their underlings. As a result, Dudu Miyān's appears to have enjoyed the peace of the land from A.D. 1847 to 1857.

From A.D. 1857 *to* 1860: At the outbreak of the Great Indian Revolt in A.D. 1857, Dudu Miyan was arrested by the British government and removed to Calcutta where be was thrown into prison [1] The charge against him, is not stated. James Wise simply said that he would have been released if he had not boasted before the Court that 50,000 men would answer his summons and march whithersoever he ordered them.[2] Probably, the apprehension produced by Mr. Dampier's Police report of A.D. 1843, in which Dudu Miyān was described as a *Wahhabi* leader at the head a "gathering of eighty thousand men."[3]—led to this arrest. The reason at any rate appears to be purely political; for, as soon as the danger of rebellion had passed off in A. D. 1859, he was released from Calcutta.[4] But when he reached home, he was again arrested by the Police of Faridpur, and immured in the Faridpur gaol. From the account of J. E. Gastrell, the manner of this arrest appears to be most intriguing. Gastrell says, "on his (Dudu Miyān's) return to the district he was cleverly captured to answer another charge against him by one of the Fureedpore *Thannah Darogahs*, who disguising himself and taking some Policemen with him presented himself before Dudu Miān and represented to him that they all desired to join the sect of Feraizees. Dudu on hearing this and suspecting nothing left his hiding place with them, was immediately captured, put

1 J. E. Gastrell: *Jessore, Fureedpore and Backergonge*, p. 36; and James Wise; *Eastern Bengal*, p. 25.

2 James Wise: Eastern Bengal, p. 25.

3 W. W. Hunter: *Indian Musalmāns*, pp. 100 and 109.

4 J. E. Gastrell: *Jessorc, Fureedpore and Backergonge*, p. 36. He, however, does not give the year, but categorically says that Dudu Miyān was kept in safe custody at Calcutta "until the close of the great mutiny". The date A. D. 1859, is therefore, easily deducible.

on board a boat which the *Darogah* had in waiting, was taken to Furidpur and lodged safely in jail."[1]

On this occasion, too, the charge was not stated. Gastrell simply says that when he was "released, he left the district then too hot to hold him, and it is believed, sought refuge in Dacca, where in 1861, he was said to be very ill."[2] In the first place, the above statement shows that he was released in the summer of 1860. Secondly, the language itself suggests that he was released from the Police custody without being brought before a law court. This arrest and imprisonment may, therefore, have been merely detention by the Police.

Nature of Dudu Miyān's Struggle : Dudu Miyān's Career as discussed above, shows that his antagonism with the *zamīndār's* and indigo planters was aimed at giving protection to the *Faraiḍi* peasantry from their oppression. The European writers, however, accuse him of criminality, lawlessness and rebellion against the British government.

(i) Mr. Dampier, the Commissioner of Bengal Police, alleged that "the real object" of the *Farā'iḍīs* was the expulsion of the foreign rulers and the "restoration of the Mahomedan power." He characterised Dudu Miyān as a dangerous intriguer and recommended (*circa.* A. D. 1847) his transportation for life and eautioned the government to watch closely the activities of the *Farā'ḍī* sect.[3]

(ii) Dudu Miyān was linked by a columnist of the *Calcutta Review*, in A.D. 1847, with the disturbances created earlier by Titu Mir. He characterised Dudu Miyān as a criminal and disturber of peace.[4]

(iii) H. Beveridge refers to Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī and Dudu Miyān as to non-officials, who "exercised more influence than any judge or magistrate" in the district of Bakarganj. He, however, adds that Dudu Miyan's character was "stained with vices," and

1 J. E. Gastrell: *Jessore, Fureedpore and Backergonge*, p. 36.
2 *Ibid.*
3 *Trial of Dudu Miyāu*, Appendix, pp. xxvii—xxxiv.
4 Vol. vii, p. 199.

that, he was not prepared to say that "his influence has been beneficial,"[1].

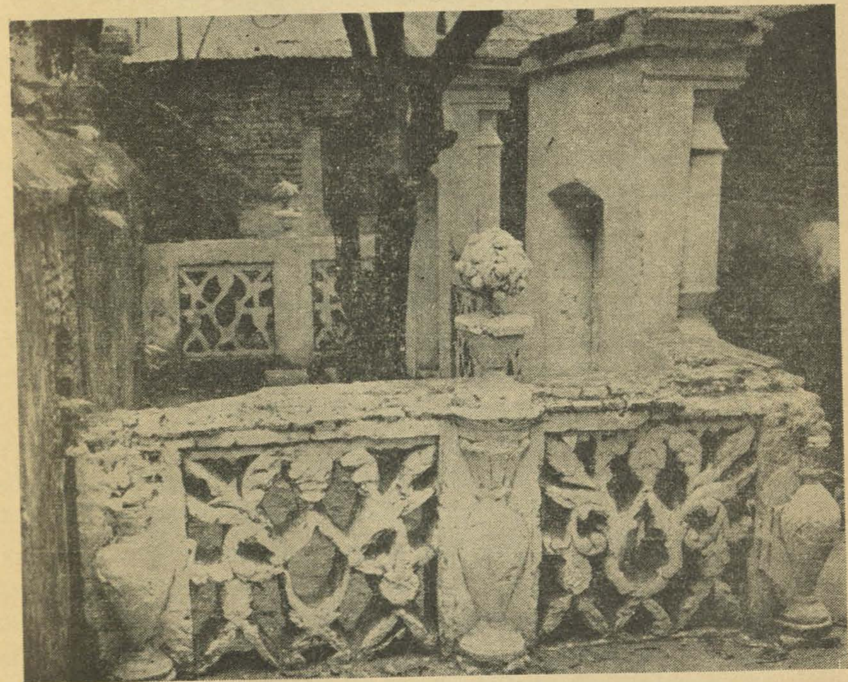
(iv) James Wise says that Dudu Miyān was "constantly compromising himself by the lawlessness of his conduct". In support of this contention he cites the instances of Dudu Miyān's trials in A.D. 1838, 1841, 1844 and 1846, which we have discussed above.

But, examined in the context of comtemporary situation and various odds against which Dudu Miyān struggled, the above allegations appear to be unwarranted. In the first place, we have seen that the charge of rebellious character against Dudu Miyān has never been proved. In a recent study Dr. Mallick says :[2]

Nowhere do we come across any intention expressed by him (Dudu Miyān) that he wanted or ever aimed at the establishment of political power by the Muslims in place of the British. The only reference of the *Fara'iḍis* uniting with the *Wahhabis* for the purpose of creating a disturbance was made by Joint Magistrate of Faridpur in his letter of 27 June, 1857, and that again was based on rumour."

Secondly, we have already noticed that the Hindu *zamindārs* and the European indigo planters and their underlings subjected the peasantry to unbearable extortion and oppression.[3] It will be seen elsewhere that the *zamīndārs* of Faridpur imposed not less than 23 items of "illegal cesses" on their tenants in addition to the authorised land revenues.[4] Dudu Miyān, who championed the cause of the peasantry, could not put up with these oppressive measures silently, and this was the reason which, in course of time, brought him in conflict with the *zamīndārs* and the indigo planters. The violence committed by his followers in this process were, motivated by the desire for protecting the *Farā'iḍi* peasantry from these oppressive measures. It certainly goes to the credit of *Farā'iḍī* movement that not a single person was murdered in the outrage of Panch Char.

1 H. Beveridge : *District of Backerganj*, London, 1876, p. 87.
2 Mallick : *British Policy*, p. 75.
3 See *supra.*, Chapter II, Section "B".
4 See *infra.*, Appendix "C", p. 327.



Mazār of Dudu Miyān at Bansal Road, Dacca. (See *J. A. S. P.*, Vol. vii, No. 2, December, 1962, pp. 343-348.)

Thirdly, Biharilal Sarkar, the Biographer of Titu Mīr, says that during the time under review the British administration had not taken firm root in rural Bengal, which left the *zamindars* free to dispose off their affairs in accordance with their despotic whims.[1] As late as A.D. 1879, the executive head of the Madaripur subdivision (the home subdivision of Dudu Miyān) admitted, that the government administration failed to protect the *Farā'iḍī* peasantry from the inhuman oppression of the *zamīndārs.*[2] De Latour's evidence further shows that it was almost impossible on the part of Dudu Miyān and his followers to secure justice against the outrages and oppressions of the European indigo planters. In deep remorse, he says, "such was the disorgamised state of Faridpur when it was either my misfortune or my good fortune to be sent to that district."[3] Dudu Miyān was, therefore, compelled by circumtances to resort to some amount of physical force in the interest of the welfare of the down-trodden peasantary.

Fourthly, H. Beveridge admits that the *Farā'iḍīs* did not appear to "share the dangerous political views of the *Wahabis* or that their revolutionary views extend beyond disputing their landlords' claim for rent."[4] On the other hand, he testifies that the Hindu *zamīndārs* and alarmists generally were fond of representing the *Farā'iḍīs* as "politically dangerous," but "without sufficient reason." He felt that they were more vigorous and less tractable than ordinary Muslims, "but this need not be a disadvantage to their character."[5]

Fifthly, although Hunter accuses the *Farā'iḍīs* of bigotry and of intolerant attitude to other's points of view, he characterises the later *Fara'iḍīs* as peaceful cultivators and traders. He says, "at the present day, the *Farāiḍīs* do not exhibit any active fanaticism nor would it be just to accuse them, as a class, of disloyalty to the British government. The majority of them are cultivators of the soil but not a few occupy the rank of traders, being especially active in the

1 *Cf.* Biharilal Sarkar: *Titū Mīr.* Calcutta, B.S. 1304, pp. 14-17.

2 See *infra.*, Chapter v, Section B and Chapter viii.

3 See *Parliamentary Papers*, vol. xiv, 1861, Indigo Commission, Extract from the Minutes of Evidence,p. 265, Reply No. 3918.

4 H. Beveridge: *District of Bakargonj, op. cit.*, pp. 254-55.

5 *Ibid.*.

export of hides. All alike are characterised by strictness of morals, religious fervour and faithful promotion of the common interests of the sect."[1]

Thus, it is evident that like Titu Mīr, Dudu Miyān was also pitted against the vested interests of the Hindu *zamīndārs* and European indigo planters and, as a consequence, was involved into a dangerous situation which threatened not only his life and property but also the very existence of the reform movement led by him. It was, therefore, his uncommon acumen and tactful manipulation of affairs that enabled him to escape from the sorrowful plight in which Titu Mīr had got stuck.

Dudu Miyān's Death: At Dacca, Dudu Miyan lived at Bansal Road, where he was quite often suffering from illness.[2] Finally, he died there in B.S. 1268 A.D. 1862,[3] probably on the 24 September as stated by Wise.[4] He lies burried at the backyard of the Dacca residence (137 Bansal Road) in which he lived. His grave still stands on a flat ground, enclosed by a rectangular structure made of brick and plaster.[5]

In the light of the above evidence, the contention of James Wise and Hidayet Hosain that Dudu Miyān "died at Bahadurpur, on the 24 September 1860," that, he "was buried there," and that, "the Arial Khan river has within the last few years washed away every trace of his house and tomb,"[6]—proves incorrect.[7] Dudu Miyān's lasting contribution to the *Farā'iḍī* movement, and the most remarkable achievement had, however, lain in the field of social reform, which will be considered in a separate chapter.[8]

1 W.W. Hunter, ed.: *Imperial Gazetteer of India, op. cit.*, vol. iv, p. 339.

2 J.E. Gazetrell: *Jessore, Fureedpore and Bākergonge, op. cit.*, p. 36.

3 Wazir 'Ali: *Muslim Ratnahār*, p. 9; gives the B.S. date; and W.W. Hunter, ed.; *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, vol. iv, p. 399: gives the A.D. date. As both the dates correspond with each other, it leaves no room for doubt.

4 See James Wise: *Eastern Bengal*, p. 26.

5 See our art. "Mazār of Dudu Miyān" in *J.A.S.P.*, Dec. 1962, p. 343 f.

6 James Wise: *Eastern Bengal*, p. 26; and M. Hidayet Hosain: "Fara'iḍi, *Encyclopaedia of Islām*, vol. ii, p. 58.

7 See our article "Mazar of Dudu Miyān" in *J.A.S.P.*, vol. vii, No. 2, December, 1962, pp. 343-48 and the plates showing the pictures of the *Mazār*.

8 See *infra.*, Chapter viii.



Gateway to the Mazār of Dudu Miyān.

Family Life of Dudu Miyan: Dudu Miyān has been described as a handsome[1] and tall person with dark flowing beards.[2] He wore a large turban on his head.[3] Current tradition ascribes 18 marriages to him; but it is said at the same time that he never kept more than four wives at a time. His last wife was a Brahman girl[4] from Kala Mridha[5] (a village about 8 miles west of Bahadurpur, the native village of Dudu Miyān). During his last days at Dacca, she lived with him and continued to live in the same residence after his death. She lies buried by the side of Dudu Miyān within the same enclosure.[6]

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1 Wazir 'Ali: *Muslim Ratnahār*, pp. 7-8; and Durr-i-Muhammad: *Puthi*, p. 13.

2 James Wise: *Eastern Bengal*, p. 26.

3 *Ibid.*

4 *Ibid.*, p. 25, also, corroborated by tradition current in the family of Dudu Miyān.

5 Tradition current in the family of Dudu Miyān.

6 Tradition current in the family of Dudu Miyān, also attested by the local people of Bansal Road (Dacca).

CHAPTER III

SUCCESSORS OF DUDU MIYĀN

Dudu Miyān's death in A.D. 1862, plunged the *Farā'iḍī* movement into a great crisis. We have seen earlier that it was the personality of Ḥājī Shari'at Allāh, and the firmness and courage of Dudu Miyān that inspired the rural Muslim society of Faridpur and its neighbouring districts with the zeal for reform and eventually brought a large number of Muslim inhabitants of Eastern Bengal under one banner. On the death of Dudu Miyān this personal force was found lacking.

Dudu Miyān left three sons behind him. The eldest son Ghiyāth al-Dīn Ḥaydar succeeded to the leadership,[1] about whose activities, we have no authentic information. He appears to have died shortly after his election, probably in A.D. 1864,[2] and was succeeded by the second son of Dudu Miyān, namely 'Abd al-Ghafūr *alias* Nayā Miyān, who was, according to tradition, only twelve years old at that time.[3]

Soon after Dudu Miyān's death, the *zamīndārs* of Faridpur renewed their old hostilities against the *Farā'iḍīs*, and the intensity of their oppression daily increased. On one occasion the agents of the *zamīndārs* made a night attack on the residence of Dudu Miyān's family at Bahadurpur, and burned all the houses to the ground.[4]

1 Wazīr 'Alī: *Muslim Ratnahār*, p. 9.

2 The date has been calculated on the basis of current tradition, see next note.

3 Tradition current in the family of Nayā Miyān. He was born in A.D. 1852 (see, *infra.*). His election to leadership in A.D. 1864, also indicates that his elder brother Ghiyāth al-Dīn Ḥaydar died in the same year.

4 Tradition current in the family of Dudu Miyān. Also, it is said that all the relics of Ḥāji Sharī'at Allāh and Dudu Miyān including many books and manuscripts were consumed by fire in this mishap.

Thus, the hostilities of the *zamīndārs* threatend the security of Dudu Miyān's family and followers.

On the other hand, Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī of Jawnpur, who opposed the *Farā'iḍī* doctrines, launched a series of mass campaign with the intention of demolishing *Farā'iḍī* movement root and branch.[1] He tried to stigmatise Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh and his follow-wers by designating them as "the *Khārijīs* of Bengal,"[2] and preached untiringly against them in the towns and market places (*bāzārs*), as well as in the village mosques, throughout the length and breadth of Eastern Bengal.[3] This threatened the existence of the *Farā'iḍī* movement itself. The following observation of James Wise testifies to the trying situation in which the *Fara'iḍīs* were landed. He says,[4] "Three sons[of Dudu Miyān]survive, of whom none has as yet exhibited any of the energy and abilities of their father. The Sect is consequently diminishing in number and many families are yearly joining the next, or *Ta'aiyunī*, division".

Thus, the death of Dudu Miyān was an irreparable loss to the *Farā'iḍī* movement; and it was not until Nayā Miyān attained to maturity that the movement regained some of its lost strength.

Dudu Miyān had, however, appointed one Munshī Faiḍ al-Dīn Mukhtār, his legal attorney in A.D. 1849,and authorised him to deal with all matters relating to his property.[5] On the eve of his imprisonment in A.D. 1857, he had appointed his son-in-law, Banī Yāmīn Miyān of Barisal, his *Mutawallī* to look after his household affairs.[6] Besides, Dudu Miyān was fortunate enough to have a learned theologian like Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār[7] among his disciples,

[1] See, *infra.*, Chapter vii.

[2] See, *Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī* : *Ḥujjat-i-Qāti'*, pp. 94-97.

[3] See, *infra.*, Chapter vii.

[4] James Wise: *Eastern Bengal*, p. 26. It may be noted that the *Ta'aiyunī*, is the religious reform movement of Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī (see, James Wise: *Eastern Bengal*, p. 7, and for details see *supra.*, Chapter II).

[5] See, J.A.S. P., Vol. vi, 1961, pp. 124—431.

[6] Tradition current in the family of Dudu Miyān.

[7] See, *infra.*, Appendix "H".

who usually acted as the *Muftī* of the *Farā'iḍīs*, and whose profound knowledge in religious sciences amply compensated the lack of it in Dudu Miyān himself.[1] During his life time these three persons acted as his representatives and personal envoys, and after his death they continued to help the family of Dudu Miyān and protect the *Farā'iḍī* movement from falling into disintegration. Thus, Dudu Miyān's confidence in them proved eventually to be a redeeming feature after his death. Moreover, Dudu Miyān had given a centralised hierarchical organisation to the *Farā'iḍī* Society.[2] Despite all trials and tribulations, this organisation stood the ground, and proved itself to be the strongest prop to the *Farā'iḍi* movement.

'ABD AL-GHAFŪR *alias* NAYĀ MIYĀN

(A.D. 1852—A.D. 1883)

'Abd al-Ghafūr *alis* Nayā Miyān, the second son of Dudu Miyān, was born in B.S. 1258[1]/A.D. 1852, at Bahadurpur.[2] Our main source of information about him is the autobiography of Navin Chandra Sen, a prominent Bengali writer and a civil servant. He was posted as Subdivisional Officer at Madaripur (the home subdivision of the *Farā'iḍī* leaders), from A.D. 1879 to A.D. 1881.[5] He was regarded as the first successful administrator of the area, and he himself claims that the secret of his success was his alliance with Nayā Miyān.[6] He knew the *Farā'iḍīs* as well as their opponents very closely with whom he often had to deal with in his official capacity, and has left a detailed account of his dealings with them in his autobiography. The second source of our information is the *Farā'iḍī Puthis*. Besides, family traditions of the *Farā'iḍīs* have been utilised sparingly wherever found helpful.

1 See, the account of his debate with Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī, *infra.*, Chapter vii.

2 See, *infra.*, Chapter viii.

3 Wazīr 'Alī: *Muslim Ratnahār*, p. 9.

4 Bahadurpur is the native village of Dudu Miyān and of his descendants. It is in the Madaripur subdivision of the present Faridpur district.

5 *Cf.* Navin Chandra Sen: *Amār Jīvan,* Calcutta, B.S. 1317, vol. iii, pp. 154 and 274.

6 Ibid, p. 154.

His Early Life: Wazīr 'Alī records that Nayā Miyān's education started under his father.[1] It must, however, be recalled that Dudu Miyān was imprisoned in A.D. 1857,[2] *i.e.*, at the fifth year of Nayā Miyān's age. This opportunity, therefore, must have been short. Wazīr 'Alī further says that, later on, a Peshawarī *Mawlawī* was engaged for tutoring him[3]. It appears from the current tradition that this *Mawlawī* stayed at Bahadurpur for a considerably long time, and Nayā Miyān owed much to this Pathan teacher for his training and education.

We have mentioned earlier that Nayā Miyān was elected leader of the *Farā'iḍīs* in A.D. 1864. He was, however, too young to take the responsibilities of leadership on his own shoulder, and the *Farā'iḍīs* were wise enough to appoint the three illustrious lieutenants of Dudu Miyān, namely Munshī Faiḍ al-Din Mukhtār, Bani Yāmin Miyān and Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār, to act as his guardians. To their credit, they acted with singular devotion and remarkable harmony until the time their protege became capable of taking his responsibilities in his own hands.[4]

As a leader : The date of Nayā Miyān's actual assumption of leadership is not known. But, in A.D. 1879, two remarkable incidents took place at Madaripur, *viz*., (*i*) a series of conflict between the Hindu *zamīndārs* and the *Farā'iḍī* peasantry; and (ii) a religious debate or *bahath* between the *Farā'iḍīs* and the *Ta'aiyunīs*. On both these occasions, we find Nayā Miyān moving enthusiastically at the head of the *Farā'iḍīs*. Navin Sen testifies that at this time his leadership was well established among the *Fara'iḍī* community. He says, "Nayā Miyān is the son of the famous Dudu Miyān and the leader of the *Farā'iḍīs* . , . A greater portion of the Muslims of Eastern Bengal, notably of Faridpur, are *Farā'iḍīs*, who accept Nayā Miyān's words as divine revealation." He further adds, "in this

1 Wazīr 'Alī: *Muslim Ratnahār*, p. 10.

2 See, *supra*., Chapter IV.

3 Wazīr 'Alī: *Muslim Ratnahār*, p. 10. His actual name has not been mentioned and he was so much well-known as the Peshawarī *Mawlawī* that his actual name is not remembered by the present day *Farī'iḍīs*.

4 Tradition current in the family of Nayā Miyān and among the *Farāiḍīs* at large.

region (*i.e.*, Madaripur) Nayā Miyn hasā established a State of his own within the British regime."[1]

In the interest of good administration Navin Sen had entered into an alliance of mutual help with Nayā Miāyn.[2] This marked the beginning of a co-operative policy of the *Farā'iḍi* leaders towards the government administration. Once having entered into an understanding, Nayā Miyān kept his promise to the last, as Navin Sen himself says, "during my stay of two years at Madaripur, Nayā Miyān never broke his promise. This was one of the secrets of my success in administering Madaripur (subdivision)"[3].

Conflict with Zamīndārs of Palang: It may be noted that Madaripur (the native subdivision of the *Farā'iḍī* leaders) has a predominently Muslim population and, according to Navin Sen, "all Muslims *ra'iyats* of the area were the followers of Nayā Miyān.[4] The biggest *zamīndāri* of the area was held by the *Chakravartīs* of Palang. In A.D. 1879, when Navin Sen took charge of Madaripur subdivision, a series of family intrighes brought the *aChkravartīs* to the notice of the government. This incident also offers a good side-view of their relations with the *Farā'iḍīs.*

Navin Sen says that the large *zamīndārī* estate of Palang was held by three brothers, who were *Chakravatrī Brahmanas.* "The eldest was good natured and peaceful, the middle was of a medium character and the youngest was so oppressive that he was known in that area as *Kaimsāvatār*", *i.e.*, the incurnation of the infamous Kaimsa, the wicked uncle of Krishna. Although one of their cousins was legally, entitled to one half of the whole estate, the three brothers gave him neither the possession of any part of the *zamīndārī* nor assigned him any benefit thereof. This cousin tried his best to come to an understanding with them but all in vain, and at

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1 Navin Chandra Sen: *Amār Jīvan, op. cit.*, vol. iii, p. 149.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 154.

3 *Ibid:* "আমি যে দুই বৎসর মাদারিপুরে ছিলাম, তিনি [নোয়ামিয়া] এ প্রতিজ্ঞা লঙ্ঘন করেন নাই। আমার মাদারিপুর সুশাসনের ইহা একটি নিগূঢ় তত্ত্ব।"

4 Navin Chandra Sen: *Amār Jīvan, op. cit.*, vol. iii, p. 142.

last, being exasperated, he decided to lease his legal title to the *Farā'idī* leader, Nayā Miyān.[1]

When the plan of their cousin came to light, the three brothers felt deep apprehension; for, Navin Sen says that the *Farā'idī* peasantry of the area were under the religious control of Nayā Miyān, who was "so powerful and so indescribably oppressive" that the above proposal made even the *Kamsāvatār* tremble. Still instead of making a compromise with their cousin, they decided to dispossess him by foul means. They forged a document for the purpose, influenced the local Sub-Registrar and got it registered by him secretly at dead of night. On complaint of their cousin, the District Magistrate Mr. Jaffery investigated the case personally and being convinced of the forgery, instituted a case against three brothers and the Sub-Registrar.[2]

It was at this time that Navin Sen was appointed Sub-divisional Officer at Madaripur. On his appointment Mr. Jaffery apprised him of the situation and instructed him to try the case personally and to see that justice is done. Navin Sen tried the case, found the accused guilty, and according to the normal procedure, committed the three brothers to the Sessions. This was, according to Navin Sen, an obvious case and had created a good deal of sensation among the people. Everybody thought that these notorious oppressors would get their due this time. But to their utter surprise, they were acquitted by the Sessions Judge, which, the people suspected, could not have happened but for the conflict that existed between the Judge and the Magistrate.[3]

On being released, the three brothers returned home in a triumphal mood, and the youngest, *Kamsāvatār*, began creating a havoc by his oppressions upon the peasantry who were mainly the *Farā'idīs*. They appealed to the government for protection and filed numerous suits against the *zamīndārs* in the court of the Sub-divisional Officer. Everyday such suits multiplied. Navin Sen tried a selected number

1 Navin Chandra Sen : *Amār Jīvan*, *op. cit.*, Vol. iii, p. 142.

2 *Ibid.*

3 *Ibid.*, p. 143.

of these cases, found the *zamīndārs* guilty, and sentenced them to different terms of imprisonment. But, on appeal to the Judge's Court, the *zamīndārs* were acquitted. In the interest of good administration, Navin Sen then took a firm stand and began to try the rest of the cases against the *zamīndārs*. But, everytime he sentenced them, they were invariably released on appeal to the Judge's Court. This process went on for about six months until all the charges against them were exhausted.[1]

Things then took a serious turn. For, being confident on their triumph over their cousin, as well as over the peasantry and the civil administration, they held a gorgious celebration of their victory in one of the houses of their cousin, which they forcibly occupied on the plea that it then belonged to them and their agents did not hesitate even to put the suckling cow calves of the peasantry on auction to realise the arrear rents.[2]

According to Navin Sen, the peasantry had no illusion that the government administration failed to protect them. They, therefore, took the matter in their own hands and circulated in the *bāzārs* that since the District Magistrate and the Sub-divisional Officer could not deliver them from the oppression of the *zamīndārs*, they themselves would save the country by three of them going to the gallows after killing the three *Chakravartīs*. Meanwhile, a band of agents (*gomashtahs* and *piyādahs*) of the *zamīndārs* were kidnapped from Palang and were carried away along with their boat, in which they used to pass their night as a measure of precaution. On this incident, the Police carried out an extensive search but no trace of them or of their boat was found. At the time of ivestigation, the Police were told that the local people had no knowledge of them ; even they never saw the agents of the *zamīndārs* at any time. It was suggested by some, rather sarcastically, that those scourges may have been taken away by *Allār Dhil* (more correctly *Allār Chīl* or the kite of God). This was, as Navin Sen says, a typical *Farā'iḍī* expression, indicating murder, and the Police had no con-

1 Navin Chandra Sen, *Amar Jivan, op. cit.*, Vol. iii, p. 143.
2 *Ibid.*

fusion that they were murdered and drowned in the river Meghna. The Police were, however, helpless as it was impossible to elicit evidence from the *Farā'iḍis.*[1]

This incident combined with the rumour of a conspiracy to murder them overwhelmed the landlords with fear and dismay; and taking their families with them, they left for Faridpur town for safety. There they took refuge in the residence of Babu Tārānāth, the government pleader of Faridpur. The whole matter was thus settled, to the satisfaction of the *Farā'iḍīs*, and also to the satisfaction of the government, as after this incident they offered to settle their dispute with their cousin amicably.[2]

If the above account of Navin Sen is true, and coming from a neutral and contemporary source, there is no reason why it should not be accepted, it leaves no room for doubt that Nayā Miyān had assumed his full responsibility much earlier than A.D. 1879. For, in A.D. 1879, he succeeded in regaining a good deal of the lost power and prestige of the *Farā'iḍī* movement.

Debate on Jum'ah: In A.D. 1879, Mawlawī Ḥafiẓ Aḥmad, the eldest son of Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī of Jawnpur, came to visit Madaripur and began to preach against the *Farā'iḍi* doctrines. This created a great commotion among the public. At one stage, the situation threatened peace and order, and the matter came to the notice of the Police. Thereupon, Navin Sen intervened, and proposed a debate to be held at Madaripur on a specified date, in which fair chances would be given to both the parties to prove their points of view. This was accepted, and a debate was held at a public place under the supervision of the Police. Navin Sen called it *Jumār Yuddha* or the battle of *Jum'ah.* The debate was attended by about 5,000 men and lasted for 7 hours, from 10 A.M. to 5 P.M. It, however, ended in a fiasco.[3]

1 Navin Chandra Sen : *Amār Jīvan*, Vol. iii, p. 144. It may be noted that the phrase "আল্লার চিল" (kite of God) is widely known among the *Farā'iḍīs.* Probably the word "চিল্ল" in the text is a printing mistake for "চিল"

2 Navin Chandra Sen, *Amār Jivān*, Vol. iii, p. 145 f.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 150 f.

The proceedings of this debate are said to have been published in a Bengali *Puthi* called *Muhjir Nāmā*.'[1] Navin Sen's account gives an impression that Nayā Miyān was considerably well versed in religious sciences, and defended the *Farā'iḍī* doctrines with remarkable success. Considering the meagreness of his educational training, it may be suggested that he must have been greatly benefitted by his association with Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār, who was at that time at the zenith of his fame as a learned theologian,[2] and who, as we have mentioned above, had been one of the guardians of Nayā Miyān. In B.S. 1289[3]/A.D. 1884, Nayā Miyān went on a pilgrimage to Makkah and died about six months after his return to Bengal at the age of 32.[4] He was buried at Bahadurpur.

KHĀN BAHĀDUR SA'ĪD AL-DĪN AḤMAD

(A.D. 1855—1906)

On the death of Nayā Miyān in A.D. 1884, the third and the youngest son of Dudu Miyān Sa'īd al-Dīn Aḥmad was acclaimed leader by the *Farā'iḍīs*. He was born in B.S. 1261[5]/A.D. 1855, at Bahadurpur. His education started at home under one Munshī Bashīr al-Dīn[6] of Faridpur. Later on, he was sent to Dacca for higher education, where he had the opportunity to study Islamic sciences under the then renowned philosopher Mawlānā Dīn Muḥammad.[7] When the Muḥsīniyah Madrasah of Dacca was started in A.D. 1874,[8] he enrolled himself there as a student and prosecuted studies under Mawlānā 'Ubayd Allah 'Ubaydi[9] for a con-

1 Wazir 'Ali : *Muslim Ratnahār*, p. 11. This work was not available to us.

2 See Appendix "H", and Chapter vii.

3 Wazir 'Alī : *Muslim Ratnahār*, p. 12.

4 *Ibid.*

5 *Ibid.*

6 Tradition current in the family of Sa'īd al-Dīn ; also supported by the tradition current in the family of his colleague in student life, Mawlawī Kafīl al-Dīn Aḥmad of Kamalāpur in the modern town of Faridpur (see Appendix "G").

7 About Mawlānā Dīn Muḥammad, see James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, p. 94.

8 See, Munshī Raḥmān 'Alī Ṭā'ish : *Tawārikh-i-Dhākā*, A.D. 1910, p. 245.

9 Tradition current in the family of Sa'īd al-Dīn.

siderable time. He got married at Dacca and often lived there until the time of his election to the leadership in A.D. 1884.

As a leader: As the leader of the *Farā'iḍī* movement, he scrupulously maintained the policy of co-operation with the government, which was adopted earlier by his elder brother Nayā Miyān. In B.S. 1304 [1]/A.D. 1899, the government of India conferred on him the title of "Khan Bahadur". His close relation with the British government appears to have caused some amount of suspicion among a section of the *Farā'iḍīs* who, although did not create any dissension within the movement, themselves gradually slipped out of it. When the question of the partition of Bengal came in/in A.D. 1905, he supported Nawāb Sir Salim Allāh Bahādur in favour of partition.[2] The policy of co-operation with the government was, as a matter of fact, continued even by his successor Ras͟hīd al-Dīn Ahmad *alias* Bads͟hāh Miyān down to B.S. 1319/A.D. 1913. i.e., until the European powers began to show all-out hostility against the Turkish empire.[3] The *Farā'iḍīs* were completely disillusioned at the end of the World War I, when the European powers including the British dismembered the Turkish empire and devided its territories among themselves. For, the *Farā'idīs* regarded the Turkish Sultan as the rightful *k͟halīfah* of the Muslim world.[4] In B.S. 1328/A.D. 1922, Bads͟hāh Miyān joined the *k͟hilafat* and the non-co-operation movement, and was arrested and imprisoned.[5]

During the time of Sa'id al-Dīn, the conflict between the *Farā'iḍi* and the *Ta'aiyunīs* had reached its climax, and religious debate (*baḥath*) between them had become a common-place occurrence in the towns and villages of Eastern Bengal. The main point of their difference revolved around the question of the legality of holding congregational prayers of *Jum'ah* and *'Id*,[6] in the villages of Bengal. Accordingly, the Muslims of Faridpur and its neighbouring districts,

1 Wazir 'Ali : *Muslim Ratnahār*, p. 13.
2 Traditian current in the family of Sa'īd al-Dīn.
3 Wazir 'Alī : *Muslim Ratanahār*, p. 18.
4 *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.
5 *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20.
6 Durr-i-Muḥammad : *Puthi*, p. 123 f.

where the *Farā'iḍī* movement was strong, were divided into two factions known as *Jum'ah Wālā* or the supportrs of the Friday congregational prayer, and *Be-Jum'ah Wālā* or those who opposed Friday prayer. In B.S. 1309/A.D. 1903 two debates were held on the question of *Jum'ah* at Dawud Kandi in the district of Tippera.[1] In the first debate khalifah 'Abd al-Jabbār represented the *Farā'iḍī* point of view and was opposed by one Mawlawi Yūsuf 'Ali.[2] The *Farā'idī Puthis* claim that the *Farā'idī* khalifah pushed his point of view successfully and proved before a large gathering that the prayer of *Jum'ah* was not lawfully permitted in the villages.[3] The defeat of the supporters of Friday prayer on this occasion, led to a great commotion among them and they decided to hold a second debate, for which they invited many learned theologians of the time. One Mawlawi Muḥsin of Jawnpur, a relative of Mawlānā Karamat 'Alī, who was then touring Eastern Bengal, also joined his hands with the opponents of the *Farā'idīs*. He actually paid a visit to the village of Matha Bhanga near Dawud Kandi and invited the *Farā'idīs* to meet him in a debate at Naya Kandi.[4] But he is said to have withdrawn on the eve of the appointed day.[5] The *Farā'idīs* proceeded to Dawud Kandi on the appointed day, headed by khalifah 'Abd al-Jabbār and Mawlawi Thanā Allah.[6] They were competent theologians and experienced in the art of debate, who succeeded to manipulate the situation in their favour and won the day.[7]

Khān Bahadur Sa'id al-Din Aḥmad died in B. S. 1312/A.D. 1206, at Madhupur in Bihar, while on an excursion. His dead body was brought to his native village Bahadurpur and buried there.[8]

1 Durr-i-Muḥammad : *Puthi*, pp. 126-33.
2 *Ibid.*
3 *Ibid.*, p. 117.
4 Nazim al-Dīn : *Puthi*, pp. 111-119.
5 *Ibid.*, pp. 117-119.
6 About Mawlawī Thanā Allāh, see Appendix H.
7 Durr-i-Muḥammad : *Puthi*, pp. 134-38, and Nāzim al-Dīn : *Puthi*, pp. 107-20.
8 Wazīr 'Alī : *Muslim Ratnahār*, p. 14.

He was a kind hearted person, generous to his friends, and amiable to high and low. He was deeply read in Islamic sciences and was fond of learned discussion. In this respect he was singularly fortunate to have a group of learned theologians around him, like Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār, Mawlawī Thanā Allāh, Mawlawī Kafīl al-Dīn Aḥmad[1] and Mawlawī 'Abd al-Ḥayy.[2]

He was survived by three sons and two daughters.[3] On his death, his eldest son Abū Khālid Rashīd al-Dīn Aḥmad *alias* Bādshāh Miyān succeeded him to the leadership of the *Farā'iḍī* movement, who is still living.*

1 About Mawlawī Kafil al-Din Aḥmad see Appendix G.

2 About Mawlawi 'Abd al-Ḥayy see Appendix H.

3 Wazīr 'Ali: *Muslim ratnahār*, p 14.

* It is regretted that Bādshāh Miyān died on the 13th December, 1959, when this study was completed.

CHAPTER VI

RELIGIOUS DOCTRINES OF THE FARĀ'IḌĪS

Since its inception down to the present day, the *Farā'iḍī* movement pursued a predominantly religious programme. The socio-economic progrrmme of Dūdū Miyān[1] gave added impetus to the movement and gained for it the support of the masses of Eastern Bengal and Assam. Although, its socio-economic aspect appears to have been most attractive to the mass of the people, its religious aspect was never underrated by its adherents.

As we have seen earlier, the *Farā'iḍīs* identified themselves with the *Ḥanafī* school of law,[2] to which the rest of the Muslims of Eastern Bengal and Assam generally belonged. There are, however, some peculiarities in the *Farā'iḍī* doctrines which distinguished them from the rest. A study of these religious peculiarities of the *Farā'iḍis* is of special interest to the students of history, because in the first place, it gives us a close view of the various problems—social, religious, economic and political—which were faced by the Muslims of Bengal after the loss of their political power: secondly, because as a type of religious reform movement, it connects Eastern Bengal with the historical trend of religious reform so common in the nineteeth century Muslim world.

In launching his reform programme, the foremost aim of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh was to enforce the original teachings of Islām and to purge the society of various superstitious rites and ceremonies which were practised by the Muslims of Bengal. His first policy was to call upon the Muslims to be penitent

1 See *infra.*, Chapter VIII.

2 See *supra.*, Chapter II.

for the past sins as a measure for the purification of the soul. This principle is known as the doctrine of *tawbah* or penitence. After this purification, he called upon them to observe strictly the *farā'iḍ* or the duties enjoined by God and the Prophet. Thus, the doctrine of *tawbah* led naturally to the second step, namely the doctrine of *farā'iḍ*,[1] and it is on account of the great emphasis laid on this doctrine that the movement came to be known as *Farā'iḍī*. Thirdly, the doctrine of the Unity of God or *tawḥīd*, as enunciated in the *Qur'ān*, was strictly enforced ; and whatever beliefs or customs were found repugnant to it were to be given up. Fourthly, the *Farā'iḍīs* differed from other Muslims of Bengal on the question of holding congregational prayers of *Jum'ah* and *'Īd* ; and fifthly, they denounced all popular rites and ceremonies which had no basis in the *Qur'ān* and the Prophetic tradition and abolished them unsparingly. These five principles of the *Farā'iḍīs* are discussed below :—

(i) *Tawbah*.—According to Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh, *tawbah* means penitence for the past sins and a resolve to abstain from sinful act in future ;[2] and the process of *tawbah* consists in administering a formula by the *ustād* (the spiritual guide) to the *shāgird* (the disciple), both of them sitting face to face. The formula is as follows[3] :—

"I am repenting for whatever sin I have committed knowingly and willingly, in the form of ascribing God's partnership

1 For explanation see *supr.*, Chapter II.

2 *Cf.* James Wise: *Eastern Bengal*, p. 22.

3 The formula is still in use, which runs as follows:-

আমি জানিয়া. ইচ্ছায় যে সমস্ত শেরেক, বেদাত নাফরমানি, অন্যায়. অত্যাচার করিয়াছি — সমস্ত হইতে তওবা করিলাম এবং ওয়াদা করিতেছি .য আল্লাকে এক বলিয়া বিশ্বাস করি এবং তাঁর যাবতীয় আদেশ ও নির্দেশ যথাশক্তি পালন করিব এবং হজরত রসুলুল্লাহ (দঃ) এর সুন্নত তরিকা মোতাবেক চলিব"

(Supplied to the present writer by Bādshāh Miyān, the last head of the *Farā'iḍī* movement).

to any other (*shirk*), indulging in sinful innovation (*bid'ah*) disobedience (to God), injustice or oppression ; and I am resolving that I shall continue to believe in the Unity of God (*tawḥīd*), and carry out His ordinances in so far as it lies in my power and lead my life in conformity to the tradition of the Prophet of God."

A person so initiated into the *Farā'iḍī* fold is called *Tawbār Muslim* (*i. e.*, a Muslim who had purified his soul by means of *tawbah*), or *Mu'min* (*i. e.* a true believer), and enjoyed equal rights in all respects with the rest of the *Farā'iḍīs.* The doctrine of *tawbah* is, in fact, the gate-way to the *Farā'iḍī* reforms, and the rest of the *Farā'iḍī* doctrines are reflected in the formula quoted above.

The process of administering *tawbah* is called by the *Farā'iḍīs* "*istighfār*,"[1] *i. e.*, seeking forgivenss from God. It is also called "*iqrārī bay'at*" *i. e.*, taking oath by the *Ustād* from the *Shāgird* orally without touching each other. This distinguishes the *Farā'iḍī bay'ah* from the other types of *bay'ah* administered by traditional *Pīrs* (or the spiritual guides), in which they usually lay their hands in the hand of the *Murīd* (disciple) Such physical contact between the *Pīr* and the *Murīd* is popularly believed to be designed for the transmission and diffusion of spiritual blessings from the former to the latter. The *Farā'iḍīs* denounce this latter kind of *bay'ah* as sinful innovation or *bid'ah* and call it *dastī bay'ah* ; for, according to their belief, it has no basis in the *Qur'ān* or the *Sunnah.* On the other hand, they claim that *iqrārī bay'ah* is based on the practice of the Prophet.

One significant point to be noted here is that the *tawbah* was administered by Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh and his successors in Bengali language as against the general practice of the *Pīrs* to administer it in Arabic, Persian or Urdu. The adop-

1 The term "*istighfār*" is derived from the Arabic verb "*ghafara*" which means "to forgive" (in the past tense). Being on the meter of *Istif'āl*, *Istighfār* means to seek forgiveness.

tion of the formula in Bengali language was apparently to simplify and popularise this doctrine among the ignorant multitude who did not know Arabic, Persian or Urdu, or as Hunter says, "not one in ten of whom could repeat the *kalima,*" *i. e.*, the simple formula of the faith.[1]

(ii) *Farā'iḍ.*—The doctrine of *farā'iḍ* or observance of obligatory duties as enjoined by Islam, is the central principle of the *Farā'iḍī* reform programme from which it has derived the name itself. By the term "*Farā'iḍ*", Ḥājī S͟harī'at Allāh meant all the duties enjoind by God and the Prophet as implied in the formula of *tawbah.* But he put special emphasis on the absolute necessity of observing the five fundamentals of Islam (*binā al-Islām*), which are (a) profession of *kalimah* (the article of the faith), (b) five time daily prayers, *i. e., namāz* or *ṣalāt,* (c) fasting during the month of *Ramaḍān*, *i. e., rozah* or *ṣawm,* (d) payment of *zakāt* or poor-tax, and (e) pilgrimage to Makkah or *ḥajj.*[2] In conformity to the Islamic injunctions, the first three are enforced on the rich and poor alike, while the last two are for the rich who alone can afford them.[3]

We have in the *Farā'iḍī Puthis* a good concept of Islam as believed by the *Farā'ḍis* and the way they sought to improve the conditions of Muslims through new principles. Durr-i-Muḥammad compares the five fundamentals of Islam with the root, branch and flower of a tree in the garden of Islam, with humblebee sucking the honey and the nightingale singing sweet melody. The rest of the religious duties or *farā'iḍ* are, according to him, like innumerable smaller branches and leaves of the tree which not only embellish it but accomplish its beauty and vitality. He is of the opinion that Ḥājī S͟harī'at Allāh's contribution to Islam in Bengal consists in revitalising the tree of faith (*Īmān*) and in raising the garden of Islam into the vigour of

1 W. W. Hunter: *England's Work in India.* Madras, 1888, p. 47 f.

2 *Cf.* Wazīr 'Alī: *Muslim Ratnahār,* p. 32 f. ; and Durr-i-Muḥammad: Puthi, p. 116.

3 *Ibid.*

a throbbing life as indicated in the above simile.[1] Durr-i-Muḥammad puts utmost emphasis on this point, especially because Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh found Islam in Bengal in a dying condition for the lack of the water of faith (*īmāner pāni*) on his return from Makkah.[2] Curiously enough, Hunter also records the same opinion when he says, "a century ago [*i. e.*, in the eighteenth century] Muhammadanism seemed to be dying of inanition in Bengal."[3] This sudden realisation of the sorry plight of Islam in Bengal apparently came after the loss of political power and showed clearly the superstition and corruption which had taken hold of the Muslim society.

Durr-i-Muḥammad cautiously guards himself from ascribing any miracle to Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh for the spectacular success of the Ḥājī in revitalising Islam in Bengal. Because, as a typical *Farā'iḍī*, he sees the welfare of the universe in the rigorous operation of the Divine law. Hence, he attributes Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh's success to his right interpretation of Islam which is an embodiment of the universal laws, and to the right type of leadership provided by the Ḥājī.

1 Durr i-Muḥamman: *Puthī*, pp. 11-12:

সে পানি পাইল যবে   দরাক্ত ইমান হবে,
তাজা হৈল হুকুমে আল্লার।
তৈয়ব কলেমা যেই   ইমানের মূল সেই,
দিনে দিনে হৈল গুলজার।
রোজা যে বাগানের কলি   নামাজ তাহাতে অলি,
জাকাত বুলবুল খোশ লাহান।।
হজ সে গাছের ডাল   শুন যত নেক হাল,
মালদার যেই মোছলমান।
এই পাঁচ হৈতে যত দোশাখা তেশাখা কত,
দীন এছলামির খুবি হৈল।"

2 *Ibid*, pp. 10-12.

3 W. W. Hunter: *England's Work in India, op eit.*, p. 47.

The *Farā'iḍis* claim themselves to be *Ḥanafī*, and both in doctrinal and legal matters follow the *Ḥanafī* school of law.[1] In their observance of religious duties (*farā'iḍ*) they have always been very strict. For instance, James Taylor, a contemporary of the Ḥājī, testifies that the *Farā'iḍīs* had the character of "being stricter in their morals than their other Mahommedan brethren."[2] The observance of the five fundamentals of Islām are especially enforced by the *Ustād* and his *Khalīfahs* in every locality where the *Farā'iḍīs* live, and irregularities are strictly censured.

(iii) *Tawḥīd or Unity of God.*—Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh being the protagonist of an Islamic revivalism, laid emphasis on the necessity of going back to simple *Qur'ānic* conception of the Unity of God or *tawḥīd.* This concept is included in the formula of *tawbah.* The doctrine of the Unity of God was, therefore, strictly enforced in the *Farā'iḍī* society and any belief or custom which was found repugnant to *tawḥīd* was abolished. The *Farā'iḍī* doctrine of the Unity of God, needs elucidation not only because the present day *Farā'iḍīs* consider it as a separate tenet, but because the *Farā'iḍis* came into direct conflict with the traditional society on the interpretation as well as the practice of this doctrine.

Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh being anxious to impress his co-religionists with the real meaning of *tawḥīd*, had included various implications of this doctrine in the formula of the *tawbah.* Bent upon practising in the fullest measure what one professed, he was unable to satisfy himself with the conventional interpretations of the doctrine of *tawḥīd*, which stresses merely upon the belief in the Unity of God. He interpreted *īmān* or faith as founded on two pillars, *viz.*, (a) to believe in the Unity of God and to stick to it firmly in practice, and (b) to refrain from ascribing God's partnership to any other.[3] Thus, in his

1 See *J.A.S.P.*, Vol. III, 1959, p. 195 f.

2 James Taylor: *Topography*, p. 248.

3 Nāẓim al-Dīn: *Puthi*, p. 3.

opinion *tawḥīd* was not only a theory but also a principle to be practised. Any belief or action which had the remotest semblance of infidelity (*kufr*) polytheism (*shirk*) or sinful innovation (*bid'ah*), such as subscribing money to or participation in Hindu rites and ceremonies, unusual reverence to the *Pīrs*, the traditional *fātiḥah* and such other practices, was, therefore, declared as repugnant to the doctrine of *tawḥīd*.[1] In fact, this boldness of the Ḥājī and his followers was the cause of much irritation in one section of the traditional society, and it eventually led Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī to denounce Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh and his followers as "the *Khārijīs* of Bengal."[2] In order to prove his point the Mawlānā argued that both the *Farā'iḍīs* and the *Khārijīs* regarded work (*'amal*) as a part and parcel of faith (*īmān*). In a hand-bill (*ishtihār*) which the Mawlānā circulated in Eastern Bengal about A. D. 1867, he says :[3]

"Because of the ignorance of the masses of Bengal, notably of the masses of the towns of Dacca, Faridpur and Barisal and their neighbourhood, and the unacquaintance of the multitude with their religion (*Dīn*), school of law (*Madhhab*) and creed (*'Aqā'id*), and because of their inability to discern between faith (*Īmān*) and work (*'Amal*), they have fallen into the trap of the *Khārijīs*" [of Bengal, *i. e.*, the *Farā'iḍīs*].

Thus, the *Farā'iḍī* doctrine of *tawḥīd* can be characterised as a doctrine of puritanism which aimed at purging the Muslim society of un-Islamic accretions The following quotations from the contemporary and later writings will illustrate the point.

(a) James Taylor says :[4]

"They [the *Farā'iḍīs*] profess to adhere to the strict letters of the Korān, and reject all ceremonies that are not sanctioned by it."

1 Nāẓim al-Dīn: *Puthi*,pp. 2-4.

2 Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī: *Ḥujjat-i-Qāṭi'*, pp. 85, 87, 95 and 97.

3 See, *Dhakhīrah-i-Karāmat*, vol.i, p. 108.

4 James Taylor: *Topography*, p. 249.

(b) W. W. Hunter says :[1]

"The articles of faith on which he [Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh] chiefly insisted were the duty of the holy war (*Jihād*), the sinfulness of infidelity (*Kufr*), or introducing rites and ceremonies into worship (*Bid'at*), and of giving partnership to the One God (*Shirk*)".

(c) H. Beverdige observes that the *Farā'iḍi* movement appears to aim at "a sort of primitive church movement, or return to the doctrine of Mahomed," and attempts to abandon "the superstitious practices which have gathered round the earlier creed by lapse of time and by contact with Hindus and other infidels."[2]

In this doctrine of *tawḥīd*, therefore, we find the closest resemblance, between the *Farā'iḍis* and the *Wahhābīs* of Arabia.[3] In fact, this is one of the basic points which entitles them to be classified with the revivalist movements.

(iv) *Congregational prayers of Jum'ah and 'Īd.*—The most noticeable distinction between the *Farā'iḍis* and other Muslims of Bengal is that the former suspended the congregational prayers of *Jum'ah* and *'Īd* under the British regime in Bengal. These prayers were resumed by them *in the towns of East Pakistan*[4] only after Independence in 1947. For, the *Farā'iḍīs* think that in accordance with *Ḥanafī* law the congregational prayers are not permitted except in *miṣr al-jāmi'* *i. e.*, in such a township where the *Amīr* (or administrator) and the *Qāḍī* (or the Judge) are present ; and the important point is that the *Amīr* and *Qāḍī* must be appointed by a lawful Muslim *Sulṭān*. Thus, the *miṣr al-jāmi'* is a constituted township in this special sense. The *Farā'iḍīs*, therefore, held that such constituted township did not exist in Bengal under the British regime.

The controversy over the legality of congregational prayers in India was not a *Farā'iḍī* innovation. It may be dated back to the period of Muslim Sultanate in Delhi. In A. D. 1344, a

1 W. W. Hunter, ed. : *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, vol. iv, p. 399.

2 H.Beveridge: *District of Bakarganj*, p. 254.

3 See *supra.*, Chapter II.

4 See *infra.*, Appendix "1".

controversy revolved around the question, where the congregational prayers could be lawfully held under an unrecognised Sulṭān, *i. e.*, in the regime of Muḥammad b. Tughlaq who did not obtain the recognition of the 'Abbaside *Khalīfah* of Cairo at that time. The contemporary historians record that in the same year the question arose in the reign of Muḥammad b. Tughlaq about the legal position of the Sulṭān, and after a good deal of controversy "Qutlugh Khān, the Sulṭān's teacher convinced the monarch that no monarchy could be lawful without a recognition from the *Khalīfah.*" Then the Sulṭān himself began to believe firmly that organised social or religious life was not lawful without the *Khalīfah's* consent, and ordered that the congregational prayers of *Jum'ah* and two *'Īds* be kept in abeyance. These prayers were revived only after he recieved a decree from the *Khalīfah* recognising him as a lawful Sulṭān.[1]

Among the Muslim jurists also the differences of opinion prevailed on the question of holding congregational prayers. In this second instance, the controversy centres round two important points, *viz.*, (a) the presence of the *Amir, i. e.*, *Khalīfah* and in later times the Sulṭān or their representative; and (b) the status of the place, *i. e.*, whether it is a *miṣr al-jāmi'* or not. We have already seen the nature of the controversy relating to the presence of *Amīr* and the other part of the controversy which relates to the definition of *miṣr al-jāmi'* is discussed below:

In the earlier times the jurists generally agreed that *miṣr al-jāmi'* is a prerequisite for holding congregational prayers.[2] But

1 *Cf.* I. H. Qureshi: *Sultanate of Dehli*, pp. 33-35; and "Facsimile of the Memoir of Muḥammad bin Tughlaq" in Agha Mahdi Husain's: *The Rise and Fall of Muḥammad bin Tughluq*, London, 1938, Persian Text at the end-2 fols; and English Translation, p. 174.

2 For instance Shaykh Burhān al-Dīn Marghinānī opens the chapter on *Jum'ah* in his *Hidāyah* (an authoritative text book of *Ḥanafī* law), with the following words:

"لا تصح الجمعة الا فی مصر جامع اوفی مصلے المصر ولا تجوز فی القری۔"

Translation: *Jum'ah* is lawful only in *miṣr* or in the neighbourhood of *miṣr* and it is not permitted in the *qurā* or villages (*cf.* *Hidāyh*, Lahore, n. d., part i, p. 148).

in their interpretation of the term "*miṣr al-Jāmi'*" they differ widely among themselves. Imām Shāfi'ī defines it "as a habitat of 40 or more persons" on whom congregational prayers are obligatory. Imām Aḥmad Ibn Ḥanbal is in full agreement with Imām Shāfi'ī. Imām Mālik permits congregational prayers even in such localities where the inhabitants count less than 40. The *Ḥanafī* jurists reject the above views, but still differ among themselves in their interpretation of *miṣr al-jāmi'*. Imām Abū Yūsuf defines *miṣr al-jāmi'* as "a locality where the *Amīr* (the administrator) and the *Qāḍī* (the Judge) reside, who enforce civil and criminal laws of Islam."[1] According to authoritative sources, the addition of the clause "who enforce civil and criminal laws," is purported to excluding those localities from the status of *miṣr al-jāmi'* where these officers do not possess the authority to enforce *sharī'ah* or any part thereof.[2] This view has also been ascribed to Imām Abū Ḥanīfah, though a different view narrated from him has been accepted generally as more representative of his views. According to this last narration, Imām Abū Ḥanīfah defines *miṣr al-jāmi'* as "a locality where if all its inhabitants assemble in the biggest of its mosques, they are not properly accommodated." In other words, he means a considerably large number. According to a third report, Imām Abū Ḥanīfah defines *miṣr al-jāmi'* as "a large township in which there are roads, lanes, market-places and many villages attached to it, and where the *wālī* (the governor or administrator) resides, who is able to administer justice and to protect the oppressed from the oppressor to whom the people (of the attached villages) turn whenever any calamity befalls them."[3]

Moreover the *Ḥanafī* jurists of the earlier times laid down six conditions which must be fulfilled for holding

1 Shaykh Burhān al-Dīn Marghināni : *Hidāyah, op. cit.*. p. 148 ; and 'Allāmah 'Aynī al-Ḥanafī : '*Umdat al-Qārī li-sharḥ Ṣaḥiḥ al-Bukhārī*, part iii, p. 264.

2 See Shaykh Burhān al-Dīn Marghināni : *Hidāyah, op. cti.*, part i, p. 148, foot note (*Ḥāshiyah*) nos. 6 and 7, by Mawlānā 'Abd al-Ḥayy.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 148, see also foot notes nos. 4 and 5 by Mawlānā 'Abd al-Ḥayy ; and 'Allāmah 'Aynī al-Ḥanafī '*Umdat al-Qārī li-sharḥ Ṣaḥiḥ al-Bukhārī, op. cit.*, part iii, p. 264 f.

congregational prayers of *Jum'ah* and *'Id, viz.*, (a) to be in *miṣr al-jāmi'*, (b) presence of the Muslim ruler or his agent, (c) prescribed time for prayer, (d) delivery of *khuṭbah* or sermon, (e) *Jamā'at* or congregation, and (f) access for all to the place of prayer.[1] As the first two conditions cannot be fulfilled except in a country ruled by the Muslims, the jurists held that congregational prayers were not obligatory on the Muslims living in *Dār al-Ḥarb i. e.*, a country ruled by non-Muslims.

After the occupation of India by the British the Muslim jurists were asked to give their decision on the status of India as to whether it continued in its previous status of *Dār al-Islām* (a country of Islām) or had relapsed into *Dār al-Ḥarb* (country of the enemy). This problem was also linked with the question of holding congregational prayers ; for, if it had relapsed into *Dār al-Ḥarb* the prayer of *Jum'ah* could no longer be deemed obligatory on its inhabitants. The question of holding the prayer of *Jum'ah* was, therefore, revived in this sub-continent along with the question of the status of the country.

Hunter's description of the situation throws considerable light on this point. He says that when the administration of British India was gradually transferred from the hands of the Muslims to the British officers the minds of many pious Muslims were "greatly agitated touching the relation" which they should hold to the British Government. They consulted the highest religious authority of the time, namely Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz of Delhi, who in response to their queries gave a legal decision (*Fatwā*) stating that when infidels get hold of a Muslim country and it becomes impossible for the Muslims living therein and in the neighbouring areas to drive the infidels away or to retain reasonable hope of ever doing so and the power of the infidels increases to such an extent that they can abolish or retain the laws of Islām at their pleasure and no one of

1 *Cf.* Shaykh Burhān al-Dīn Marghīnānī : *Hidāyah. op, cit.*, pp. 842-251.

the Muslims is strong enough to seize on the revenues of the country without the permission of the infidels and the Muslims no longer feel so secure as before—such a country is positively a *Dār al-Ḥarb i. e.*, a country of the enemy.[1] This undoubtedly reflected the situation in Bengal during the last two decades of the eighteenth century.

When the British power was fully consolidated during the early decades of the nineteenth century, the decision of the Muslim jurists became, according to Hunter, less hypothetical and more explicit.[2] The highest religious authority of this later time, Mawlawī 'Abd al-Ḥayy, stated in a *Fatwā* that the empire of the Christians from Calcutta to Delhi and other provinces adjacent to Hindustan (*i. e.*, north-west provinces of India) were all *Dār al-Ḥarb*. For, infidelity (*kufr*) and polytheism (*shirk*) "are everywhere current there and no recourse is made to the laws of Islām" and whenever such circumstances "exist in any country, the country is *Dār al-Ḥarb*."[3]

Hunter says that the above decisions bore practical fruit. "The W*ahhābīs* whose zeal is greater than their knowledge deduce from the fact of India being technically a country of the enemy, the obligation to wage war upon its rulers." He adds, however, that the more enlightened section of the Muslims "while sorrowfully accepting the fact, regard it not as a ground of rebellion but as a curtailment of their sipiritual privileges," and as such many devout Muslims refrained from attending the Friday prayers. Even some of the mosques refused to allow its performance.[4] The fact that Hunter is not referring herein to the *Farā'iḍīs* will be clear from the instances cited by him in support of his contention. He says[5] :

"Thus, the two most eminent Musalmāns of Calcutta in their respective walks of life, the late head Professor of the

1 W. W. Hunter : *Indian Musalmāns* pp. 142-43.

2 *Ibid.*

3 *Ibid.*

4 *Ibid.*

5 W. W. Hunter : *Indian Musalmāns*' pp. 142-43.

Muhammadan College [*i. e.*, Madrasah 'Āliyah] Maulvi Muḥammad Wajīh and the late Chief of all the Muhammadan Law Officers (the Kazi-ul-Kuzat) Fazlur Rahman refrained from saying the Friday prayer. They accepted the position of India as Country of the Enemy as a curtailment to this extent of their religious privileges. But they lived as loyal subjects to, and honoured servants of the British Government."

Thus, in the first case, the presence of a lawful Muslim ruler was in question for the permissibility of the congregational prayers of *Jum'ah* and *'Id*; and in the second case, it was the status of the country, *i. e.*, *Dār al-Ḥarb*, which induced a section of the learned circle to refrain from saying the prayer of *Jum'ah*. The *Farā'iḍīs*, however, do not lay so much emphasis on the question of the political status of the country, *i. e.*, whether it is *Dār al-Islām* or *Dār al-Ḥarb*, as they do on the question of the locality, *i. e.*, whether or not it is *miṣr-al-jāmi'*, which virtually includes the condition requiring the presence of a lawful Muslim ruler or his agent. This point was clearly brought out during a debate between Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī and the *Farā'iḍī khalīfah*, 'Abd al-Jabbār, held in A. D. 1867 at Barisal. For, when the Mawlānā proposed to include the question relating to the status of India in the agenda of the debate, the *khalīfah* showed the greatest reluctance to discuss a problem of political nature; so that the point was dropped out of the agenda.[1]

A *Fatwā* or legal opinion of the *Farā'iḍīs* (which has been recently recovered by the present writer), has dealt elaborately with the problem of *Jum'ah*. This *Fatwā* opens with the following question.[2]

"In the name of Allāh, the most compassionate and merciful. Is the prayer of *Jum'ah* permitted in the village of Bengal in

1 See, Mawlawi Karāmat 'Alī : *Ḥujjat-i-Qāṭi'*, p. 104 ff.

2 *Farā'iḍī Fatwā* (See *supra.*, Chapter. I). It reads:

"سوال :- دیار بنگالہ میں نماز جمعہ گاؤں میں جائز ہے یا نہیں احادیث اور فقہ
کے موافق بیان کیجئے -"

accordance with the tradition of the Prophet (*Ḥadīth*) ahd Islāmic Law (*Fiqh*), or not? Plesse explain."

In their answer, the *Farā'iḍī 'ulamā* make no reference to the status of India under the British rule, but go back to the old *Ḥanafī* school of jurists in order to prove that holding congregational prayer of *Jum'ah* is not permitted in the villages (or *qurā*, plural of *qaryah*). In the *Farā'iḍī Fatwā* they quote from 'Allāmah 'Aynī, the well-known *Ḥanafī* commentator of *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, the following[1] :—

"The learned Doctors have differed in their opinion regarding such places where the prayers of *Jum'ah* can be held. Imām Mālik said: *Jum'ah* is obligatory on the inhabitants of a locality (*qaryah*) which has a mosque or a market in it. ... Imām Shāfi'ī and Imām Aḥmad said, 'every locality which is inhabited by 4o free men, who have come of age, are in sound brain, and permanently residing there, who do not leave that place for any other place in the summer or winter except for occasional nessity, the *Jum'ah* is obligatory on its inhabitants, all the same whether their residences are built of stone, wood, mud, bamboo or any other material; only on one condition that their residences stand closely together. But, if the houses lie scattered (in separate localities), *Jum'ah* is not lawfully permitted there. ... Imām Abū Ḥanīfah holds the opinion that *Jum'ah* is not lawful except in *miṣr al-jāmi'* or in its neighbourhood (*muṣallā al-miṣr*); and it is not lawful in the villages (*qurā*).'

1 Compare 'Allāmah 'Aynī al-Ḥanafī : '*Umdat al-Qārī li-sharḥ Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, op. cit.* part III p. 264, reads :

"واختلف العلماء فى الموضع الذى تقام فيه الجمعه فقال مالك كل قريه فيها مسجد او سوق فالجمعه واجبه على اهلها (ولا يجب على اهل العمود و ان كثروا لا نهم فى حكم المسافرين) و قال الشافعى و احمد كل قريه فيها اربعون رجلا احرارا بالغين عقلاء مقيمين بها لا يظعنون عنها صيفا و لا شتاء الا ظعن حاجه فالجمعه واجبه عليهم و سواء كان البناء من حجر او خشب او طين او قصب او غير ها بشرط ان تكون الابنيه مجتمعه فان كانت متفرقه لم تصح . و مذهب ابى حنيفه رضى الله تعالى عنه لا تصح الجمعه الا فى مصر جامع او فى مصلى المصر ولا يجوز فى القرى -"

In the same *Fatwā*, the *Farā'iḍis* contend that in the light of the tradition of the Prophet (*Ḥadīth*) and of his Companions (*Āthār al-Ṣaḥābah*), the opinion of the *Ḥanafi* school of law (*i. e.*, not permitting the prayer of *Jum'ah* in the villages), is sounder than, and preferable to other schools of opinions. The *Farā'iḍīs* then quote from the Tradition of the Prophet and his Companions in support of their contention. After a lengthy discussion, they come to the following conclusions :

(a) *Miṣr al-jāmi'* in which alone the prayer of *Jum'ah* is permitted, "is a locality where the *Amīr* (the administrator) and the *Qāḍī* (the Judge), or else the *Ḥākim* (the Judge-administrator) reside." Therefore, such localities where they do not reside cannot be regarded as *miṣr al-jāmi'* ; and consequently, the prayer of *Jum'ah* cannot be lawfully held there".[1]

(b) Speaking properly, there is no mosque at all in the majority of the villages of Bengal. "Even if there are a few Houses of Prayer, they cannot be regarded as mosques without being endowed for the purpose. How then these villages can be regarded as *miṣr al-jāmi'* ; and how can the prayer of *Jum'ah* be permitted there? We take refuge with Allāh from misunderstanding and prejudice."[2]

Thus, the arguments of the *Farā'iḍīs* centre round the definition of *miṣr al-jāmi'*, which, in their opinion, must be a residence of the *Amīr* and the *Qāḍī* or else of the *Ḥākims* in whom the function of the *Amīr* and the *Qāḍī* are combined. As neither the villages nor the towns of Bengal under the British, fulfilled these requirements in the technical sense (*i. e.*, through the delegation of authority by a lawful Muslim ruler), the *Farā'iḍīs* saw no justification in holding the prayer of *Jum'ah* under the British regime.

1 Cf. *Farā'iḍī Fatwā* (see *supra.*, Chapter I), It read:
"مختصر تعریف یہ ہے کہ جہاں امیر و قاضی یعنی حاکم رہتے ہوں وہ جگھہ شہر ہے"

2 *Ibid.*, it reads:
"اور بنگالہ کے اکثر دیہاتوں میں اصلا مسجد ھی نہیں ہے اگر کسی گاؤں میں دو ایک گھر مخصوص نماز کے لئے ہے تو وہ بھی بلا شرائط وقف مسجد ہو نہیں سکتے ھیں - پھر کہاں مصر ہونا اور کیونکر جمعہ پڑھنا - نعوذ باللہ من سؤالفہم والتعصب۔"

The traditional society, however, continued to hold the congregational prayers as usual despite the political changes taking place in the country. Hunter refers to them saying, "many Muhammadans who acknowledge the lapsed state of India, do not go so far as to deny themselves the consolations of the Friday Service."[1] Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī advocated in A. D 1880, the status of *Dār al-Islām* for India, on the plea that under the British rule India was *Dār al-Amān* or a State of Security where civil and religious liberty was ensured.[2] Even earlier in A. D. 1867, he appears to have regarded India as continuing in the previous status of *Dār al-Islām*, and on that basis argued that the congregational prayer of *Jum'ah* was *farīḍāh* or obligatory on the Muslims of India.[3]

Furthermore, Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī pointed out that the prayer of *Jum'ah* was one of the biggest monument of Islām[4], which, therefore, must be carried out under all circumstances. The then lapsed state of India was, however, too obvious to be denied altogether, and the doubt in the permissibility of holding the prayer of *Jum'ah*, could not be easily dispelled. He, therefore, advocated that four *rak'at* of *Ẓuhr* prayer be added to the usual prayer of *Jum'ah* ;[5] so that, even if the prayer of *Jum'ah* fell short of fulfilling the full sipiritual obligation because of the lapsed state of the country, the prayer of *Ẓuhr* would, at any rate, repair the deficiency.

As a matter of fact, this last position, namely the addition of four *rak'at* of *Ẓuhr* prayer with the prayer of *Jum'ah* was

1 W. W. Hunter: *Indian Musalmāns*, p. 143.

2 *Cf. Abstract of Proceedings of the Mahomedan Literary-Society of Calcutta of a Meeting held at the Residence of Maulvie Abdool Luteef Khan Bahadoor on 23 November*, 1870, Lacture of Mawlawi Karāmat 'Ali, p. 5 f.; and W. W. Hunter : *Indian Musalmāns*, pp. 139-40.

3 *Cf.* Mawlawī Karāmat 'Ali : *Ḥujjat-i-Qāṭi'*, p. 104 f.

4 See, Mawlawī Karāmat 'Ali's *Ishtihār*, in *Dhākhīrah-i-Karāmat*, vol. i, Calcutta, A. H. 1344, p, 108.

5 See, Mawlawī Karāmat 'Ali : *Miftāḥ al-Jannat*. 3rd ed., A.H. 1251, .p 159 f.

not an innovation of Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī. This was advocated earlier by Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz. He was asked to give legal opinion (*fatwā*) with regard to "whether the prayer of *Jum'ah* in the regime of infidels obliterates the obligation of saying the prayer of *Ẓuhr* (as it is usual in *Dār al-Islām*) or not."[1] Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz (A. D. 1746-1823) replied, "the order school of the *Ḥanafī* had made the permissibility of the prayer of *Jum'ah* conditional to the presence of the Sulṭān or his agent. The later school of the *Ḥanafī* at the time of Chingiz (*Khān*), however, gave the *Fatwā* that when the infidels (holding the political power) appoint a Muslim governor in a town, he (*i. e.*, the Muslim governor) stands in the place of the Sulṭān ; and the holding of the prayers of *Jum'ah* and *'Īds* is permissible in his presence. Because of the rise of the new situation they relaxed the rules proportionately," "It has been laid down in the *Fatāwā-i-'Ālamgīrī*", he continues, "that it is permissible for the Muslims to hold the prayer of *Jum'ah* under the regime of the infidels, and the Muslims have the right to appoint a *Qāḍī* by mutual agreement, but they must strive for a Muslim regime. But in addition to the prayer of *Jum'ah* four *rak'at* [of *Ẓuhr* prayer] are neccssery by way of caution."[2]

1 *Cf.* Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz : *Fatāwā-i-'Azīzi,* vol. i, p. 32 ; and vol. ii, p. 4 :
"سوال :- صحت ادائے نماز جمعه و سقوط فرض ظہر در ایں زماں و در ایں مکان چه حال دارد ؟ "

2 *Cf.* Shāh 'Abd al-'Azīz - *Fatāwā-i-'Azīzi,* vol. i, p. 32 : and vol. ii, p. 4 :
"جواب :- صحت ادائے نماز جمعه نزد قدماء حنفیه مشروط بسلطان یا نائب سلطان است متأخرین ایشان درعہد چنگیزیه فتویٰ دادند یا انکه ہرگاه از طرف کفار والی مسلمان در شہر متمکن باشد او حکم سلطان دارد و اقامت جمعه و اعیاد از وے صحیح است و کسانیکه متأخر تر پیدا شد ند از ایں قدر هم توسع کر دند - فی العالمگیریه" بلاد علیها و لاة کفار یجوز للمسلمین اقامه" الجمعه و یصیر القاضی قاضیا بتراض المسلمین و یجب علیهم ان یلتمسوا والیا مسلما...بالجمله ادائے چہار رکعت علیٰ سبیل الاحتیاط ضرور است — والله اعلم -"

The *Farā'iḍīs* detested this new position of saying the prayers of *Jum'ah* and *Ẓuhr* together, and expressed their indignation against it, as recorded by Durr-i-Muḥammad. He says[1] :

"It [the prayer of *Ẓuhr* or *Ākhir-i-Ẓuhr* together with that of *Jum'ah*] has no root in the *madhhab* ; rather some of the theologians of the later time have invented it on account of their doubt about the permissibility of saying the prayer of *Jum'ah* secretly at their private homes."

The *Farā'iḍīs* also detested the general practice of holding the prayer of *Jum'ah* in the villages. For, they equated the villages of Bengal with the Arabian *qaryah* as opposed to *miṣr* or town ; and held that the congregational prayers of *Jum'ah* and *'Īd* were not only unlawful but near prohibited (*makruh taḥrīmah*) In the villages of Bengal.[2] In the above-mentioned *Farā'iḍī Fatwā* the *Farā'iḍīs* singled out the *Ahl-i-Ḥadīth* for criticism on this point. It reads.[3]

"But the new sect whose adherents do not follow any particular Imām, and claim themselves to be *Ahl-i-Ḥadīth*, hold the prayer of *Jum'ah* in every place without distinction."

The above discussioa clearly shows that the *Farā'iḍīs* were not in the tradition of the reform ideas disseminated by Shāh Wali Allāh and his successors ; whereas the *Ṭarīqah*-i-*Muḥammadiyah*, *Ahl-i-Ḥadīth* and the *Ta'aiyuni* belonged, in one way or another, to the reformist tradition of the Shāh. The doctrine of *Jum'ah* being one of the cardinal points of the *Farā'iḍī* movement, it is also difficult to establish a link of the *Farā'iḍī* trend of reform either with the *Wahhābī* tradition of Arabia

1 *Cf.* Durr-i-Muḥammad : *Puthi*, p. 41 :
"و ليس لها اصل فى المذهب و انما وضعها بعض المتأخرين عند الشک فى صحة الجمعة فى البيت مخفيا ."

2 *Ibid.*, p. 81.

3 *Farā'iḍī Fatwā* (see *supra.*, Chapter I), It reads :
"علاوہ اسکے غیر مقلدین کا جدید فرقہ بنام اهل حدیث اپنے کو مشهور کرتے هیں بلا امتیاز مکان هر جگہ کیف ما اتفق جمعہ ادا کرتے هیں ."

or, as H. A. R. Gibb suggests, with the *Salafiyah* movement of Egypt.[1] The main source of its inspiration may, therefore, be sought in the indigenous soil, which demands an examination of the contemporary events in Bengal against which the *Farā'iḍī* doctrines had developed.

We have seen that the main objection of the *Fara'iḍis* to the congregational prayers in Bengal is that the presence of *Amīr* and the *Qāḍī* which was a necessary condition for holding those prayers, was missing. In the pre-British Muslim administration the *Qāḍī* had many important functions to perform besides his normal function of the administration of justice. For, being the custodian of the *sharī'ah* or Islamic law and morality, his assistance and supervision were indispensable to the Muslim community. The administrative changes which were brought about by the British during the second half of the eighteenth century and after, had curtailed the powers and privileges of the *Qāḍī* drastically, with disastrous effect of the Muslim community.

James Wise observes that prior to the British occupation of Bengal, the *Qāḍī* was the spiritual leader of the Muslims who, although was appointed by the Nawab, was subordinate only to the *Qāḍī al-Quḍāt* of Delhi. He administered the law, superintended the education of the Muslim children, expounded the orthodoxy of religion to the Muslims and resolved all religious disputes. Evenly scattered throughout the country were his *Nā'ibs* or assistants, "who watched over the spiritual welfare of the Muslims, instructed them in faith and suppressed dissent or profession of independent thought." The power of the *Qāḍī* was great and "was equally dreaded by the monarch and the people." "In 1765, when the *Dīwānī* passed into the hands of the East India Company," continues Wise, "a great change took place." The *Qāḍīs* still served but deprived of their power, and no longer a terror to evil-doers. They became "judicial officers without any authority as religious instructors,

1 H. A.R. Gibb : *Mohammadanism*, 1955 ; p. 138.

or arbitators."[1] The importance of the position of the *Qāḍī* and his assistants in the then Muslim social system is further seen in Hunter's reference to the accusation of the Muslims of Bengal against the British regime. He says: "they accuse us of having brought miseries into thousands of families by abolishing their law officers, who gave the sanction of religion to the marriage tie, and who from the time immemorial have been the depositories and administrators of the Domestic law of Islam. They accuse us of imperilling their souls by denying them the means of performing the duties of their faith."[2]

Examined in the tenor of above evidences, it appears that the *Farā'iḍī* doctrine of non-permissibility of the congregational prayers was not only a doctrine for doctrine's sake, but implied a protest against the administrative changes brought by the British to the detriment of the Muslim society and to the utter disregard of the Muslim sentiment. The specific mention of the *Amīr*, *Qāḍī* and *Ḥākim* by them, in this connection lend further support to this view.

As a matter of fact, the question of the status of India had equally agitated the Muslim mind in the middle of the eighteenth century, when the Marhattas overran the Mug͟hal empire. But, in the words of Hunter, "as the Marhattas satisfied themselves with taking one-fourth of the revenue (*Chauth*), without further interfering with the actual administration," India was regarded as continuing in the status of *Dār al-Islām*; and the learned Doctors of the time gave *fatwā* in favour of continuing the normal social and religious life. With regard to the British regime Hunter himself admits, "not one of the reasons here assigned [*i. e.*, in the case of Marhatta], for India continuing a Country of the Faithful hold good at the present day."[3]

This point (*i. e.*, the protest of the *Farā'iḍīs*), is further illustrated by a remark of K͟halīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār in course of

1 James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, p. 21,

2 W. W. Hunter : *Indian Musalmans*, p. 148.

3 *Ibid*,. p 137.

his debate with Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī at Barisal in A. D. 1867. During this debate it was suggested by a theologian on the basis of a Makkan *fatwā* that if the Muslims of a locality under the British regime and British administration, appointed an *imām* to lead them in prayer, the prayer of *Jum'ah* could be lawfully held. Thereupon, addressing the *Kutwāl* of the town (a Police Officer), the *Khalīfah* replied, "if we appoint an *Imām* you would put handcuffs on our hand."[1]

Thus, the reluctance of the *Farā'iḍī khalīfah* to discuss the status of India in the debate, referred to above, was probably due to his fear of the British power and his unwillingness to come in conflict with that power rather than the indifference or confusion of the *Farā'iḍīs* with regard to the status of India. In fact, the suspension of congregational prayer itself implies that they assumed Indo-Pakistan subcontinent under the British rule to be *Dār al-Ḥarb*.

(v) *Denunciation of Popular Rites and Ceremonies.*—We have seen in the doctrine of *tawbah* that the *Farā'iḍīs* are required to part with *shirk*, *bid'ah* and all kinds of un-Islamic practices. This puritan attitude of the *Farā'iḍīs* is further emphasised in the doctrine of *tawḥīd*, which demands abstention from indulging in any belief or practice antagonistic to the doctrine of the Unity of God. Naturally, *Ḥāji Sharī'at* Allāh abolished numerous customs, usages, rites and ceremonies, and not a semblance of *kufr*, *shirk* or *bid'ah*, was left untouched. The contemporary and later sources are replete with lists of vices of every description that were condemned by the *Ḥājī*, and abolished from the *Farā'iḍī* circle.

James Taylor records that the *Farā'iḍīs* rejected the rites of Puttee, Chuttee and Chilla, which were performed between the first and the fortieth day after the birth of a baby, and observed only the rite of *'aqīqah* or the naming ceremony which is in con-

1 Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī : *Ḥujjat-i-Qāṭi'*, p. 104 f.
"عبدالجبار نے کوتوال شہر کی طرف مخاطب ہو کے کہا کہ اگر ہم امام مقرر کریں
تو آپ ہاتھہ میں ہتھکڑی ڈال دینگے۔"

formity with Islamic injunction, and which consists of sacrificing two he-gots for a male baby and one for a female baby for the entertainment of friends and relatives. He further records that the ceremonies on the occasions of shaving the child's head, marriage and funerals were simplified and divested of all un-Islamic customs and formalities, such as *shabgasht* procession of the wedding, and various *fātiḥahs* connected with the funeral.[1]

Enumerating the purges made by *Ḥājī* Sharī'at Allāh, Durr-i-Muḥammad says[2] :—

"It was the custom of the *Mushrik*[3] to float the *Beerā*[4] on the water, in the name of *Khawāj*.

The *Mushrik Gānyār* used to build shrines of *Ghāzi* and Kālu[5] and worshipped them.

They used to worship the shrine of Bibi Fāṭimah[6] and many held twelve *Pujās* in tweve months (of the year,)[7]

Dance, music and *Fātiḥah* (and other) rites and ceremonies of the *Mushrik* and many *Bid'āt* were theirs ;

1 *Cf.* James Taylor: *Topography*, pp. 249-50. It may be noted that "Chuttee" is correctly *Chāti*, and "Chilla" apparently correspods to *Asauchi Ghar*, for the description of which, see James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, pp. 50-52. *Fātihaḥ* is a rite for the remembrance of dead anncestors (see *supra.*, Chapter ii, Section B).

2 Durr-i-Muḥammad *Puthi*, p. 27.

মোশ্রেকগনের কাম ছিল কালে কালে ।। খোয়াজের ভেড়া ভাসাইত জলে ।
গাজী ও কালুর দর্গা করিত তৈয়ার ।। পূজিত তাহাকে যত মোশরেক গাঙার ।
বিবি ফাতেমার দর্গা পূজিত যতনে ।। বারমাসে বার পূজা দিত জনে জনে ।
নাচ বাদ্য রছম ফাতেহা মশরেকের । আর যত বেদাত আছিল তাহাদের ।
দশহরা রথ যাত্রা চড়ক দেখিত ।। পীরের নামেতে পূজা জনে জনে দিত ।"

3 The Arabic term "Mushrik" means one who gives partnership to God. But in this passage this terms is applied to the corrupt Muslims.

4 For deseription, see James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, p. 12 f.

5 Two popular Muslim saints, see, *ibid.*. p. 13-14.

6 See *ibid.*, p. 9.

7 The Hindus are said to have twelve or thirteen *Pujās* in twelve months some instances of which are given below in the passage such as *Dasehra*, *Ratha Yāthrā*, etc.

(Such as) witnessing the *Dasehrā*, *Ratha Yātrā*, and *Charak Pujā*, and the worship of saints."[1]

He adds further :[2]

"Weeping and the holding of *Zārī* in commemoration of the martydom of Ḥasan and Ḥusayn[3], were the customs of the *Mushrik*.

(They) raised the *Makām* of *Panch Pīr*[4], and held ceremonial fast.

On the occasion of first menstruation they planted banana trees around the residence.

All the *Bid'āt* were abolished (by the Ḥājī), and the sun of Islam rose high on the sky.

Having arrived there Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh propagated religion throughout Bengal."

Although the *Farā'iḍīs* carried out sweeping reforms (as it is evident from the above quotations) without much let or Hindrance[5], yet their laying of hands on a few time-honoured institutions relating to Pirism, caste prejudices and employment of *Dai*

1 See description in James Wise : *Estern Bengal*, p. 11.

2 Durr-i-Muḥammad : *Puthi*, p. 27.

"মহরমে এমাম হাছেন হোছেনের।
হায় হায় জারি ছিল মশরেকগনের।
পাচ পীরের নামেতে মোকাম উঠাইয়া।।
উপবাস করিত সে সকলে মিলিয়া।
প্রথম হায়েজ যদি হইত কাহার।।
কলাগাছ গাড়িত বাড়ীর চারি ধার।
সে সব বেদাত এবে হইল মেছমার।।
উঠিল এছলামি সূর্য্য গগন মাঝার।
হাজি শরিতুল্লা হেথা তশরিফ আনিয়া।।
দীন জারি করিলেন বাঙ্গালা জুড়িয়া।

3 See James Wise : *Estern Bengal*, p. 9.

4 See *ibid.*, p. 17.

5 See James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, p. 22.

or midwife, evoked considerable opposition from a section of the traditional society.

(a) *Pīrism*—We have seen earlier that Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh was initiated into the *Qādiriyah* order of sufism by his teacher Ṭāhir Sombal. He regarded mysticism as a branch of higher religious knowledge, and held that in order to be able to tread on the mystic path a person must be well conversant with the *sharī'ah* (Islamic law) as well as with *ṭarīqah* (the science of mysticism); because an initiate would otherwise be prepetually in danger of falling a victim to temptation and allurement, which might ultimately lead him astray. The Ḥājī, therefore, made a distinction between the *khawāṣ* (the select) and the *'awām* (the commoners), and permitted only the former to be initiated into mystic orders[1], the latter were, on the other hand, encouraged to recite from the *Qur'ān* regularly.

Bent upon eradicating all practices which directly or indirectly conflicted with the pure monotheism (*tawḥīd*) of Islam, the Ḥājī denounced the then prevalent practice of regarding the *Pīr* (the mystic guide or master) as an intermediary between God and man[2]. He defined the *Pīr-murīd* (master discipte) relationship, as one of teacher (*ustād*) and student (*shāgird*), and pleaded that the terms "*ustād*" and "*shāgird*", which "did not suggest complete submission," should be used in place of "*Pīr*" and "*Murīd*."[3] He further alleged that the term "*Pīr*" had, through corrupt usage, acquired an air of demigodness and had lost its real significance in the wilderness of corrupt and superstitious practices that had gathered around the names of many real as well as legendary *Pīrs*[4]. He, therefore, deemed it necessary to dispense with this term altogether.

1 See the argument of Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār to this effect, in Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī ; *Ḥujjat al-Qāṭi'*, *op.cit.*, p.104 f,

2 This degraded state of Pīrism in Eastern Bengal, has been fully described by James Wise in his *Eastern Bengal*, pp. 10-20 ; and by Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī in his *Muqāmi' al-Mubtadi'īn* (see, *Dhakhīrah-i-Karāmat* vol. ii, pp. 177-200), and in *Mukāshifāt-i-Raḥmat* (see, *ibid.*. vol I, p. 13 f.

3 See James Wise : *Eastern Bengāl*, p. 22.

4 See instances in *ibid.*, pp 10-20.

Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh had also denounced the custom of holding *'urs* or the death anniversary of *Pīrs*[1], as, it was in reality a *fātiḥah*, which he viewed as a *bid'ah* (sinful innovation). With regard to the initiation ceremony, the Ḥājī disapproved the practice of laying the hand of the *ustād* or *Pīr* in that of the disciple. This subject later on figured prominently in a debate between Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī and Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār, and will be discussed further in the next chapter.

(b) *Caste Prejudices.*—Probably, due to the presence of an overwhelming majority of *Chandāls* or *Nama-Sudras* among the Hindu population of Faridpur and Bakarganj, who were despised, segregated and often tortured by the caste Hindus, the practice of untouchability, and racial discrimination had been, until very recently, the dominant feature of the Hindu society of Faridpur, Jessore and Bakarganj.[2] Some sort of these discriminatory prejudices appear to have also been contacted by the Muslims from their Hindu neighbours, and the *Sayyids*, *Shaykhs*, *Pathans* and *the Mullāhs* occupied a position in the Muslim society of Faridpur which is not unfavourably comparable to that of the high caste Hindus. Among them the *Sayyids* of Girda and Gopalganj, the *Khundkārs* of Gotti, the *Chowdhuris* of Gobra, Belgachi, Khanpura, Kartikpur and Habsganj, and finally the Qāḍīs of Gopalpur and Baghdanga are well known for their hereditary high tradition.[3] On the other hand, the *Julāhā* (weaver), *Beldār* (digger), *Nikāri* (fish monger), *kulu* (oil grinder), *Kāhār* or *Chākar* (*Palki* beerer and *Pānkā* puller), and the *Dai* (midwife), who formed exclusive castes,[4] were discriminated by other Muslims. Eor instance, O'Malley gives an account of "a peculiar class of Muhammadans called Chaklai Musalmans who were practically ostracised by other Muhammadans," beceuse some of their ancestors were said to have committed the offence of selling fish

1 See *supra.*, Chapter ii.

2 *Cf.* L. S. S. O'Malley : *Bengal District Gazetteers, Faridpur*, pp. 46-47

3 Information collected from local people during a tour in A,D. 1957.

4 See, the list of Muslim caste of Faridpur in Appendix "A". p. 32o.

in the open market or to a group of fishermen.[1] Beveridge tells us that the Muslims of Bakarganj were fond of talking about their caste, and that, there were several subdivisions among them. He gives one example of "*Chākars* (servants)" who were "*Pālki* bearers and *Pānkah* pullers, and who lived in considerable number near Barisal, and who were looked down upon by other Muslims.[2] Describing the population of Dacca city, James Taylor, a contemporary of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh, says[3], "several of the communities into which the lower classes of the Mahomedans are divided, according to their occupations and employments, have assumed the character of castes, and in regard to marrying and eating whith each other they are quite exclusive as the Hindoos." James Wise says that the Muslims of Bengal "have followed in many respects the system of caste as practised by the Hindus, although the principle that a son must carry on the trade or occupation of his father has never been reduced to a formula."[4] These evidences show that some amount of discriminatory prejudices had existed among the Muslims, in some form or other.

The *Farā'iḍī* reformer, Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh viewed the existence of social discrimination among the Muslims with grave concern and denounced it as a deadly sin ; because, in his opinion such practices were contradictory to the spirit of the *Qur'ān*. He emphasised on the equality of all Muslims and held that the *Farā'ḍis* or the *Tawbār Muslims*, who have submitted most humbly to the will of God, repented for their past sins and resolved to lead a godly life in future,[5] could not be subjected to unequal treatment or discrimination either among themselves or in the outside society. In fact, by dint of their fuller submission to God, the *Farā'iḍis* had a better claim to social or human privileges if there were any, over the *Riwājis* or those who followed the traditional customs and superstitions. This declaration of

1 L. S. S. O'Malley : *Bengal District Gazetteers, Jessore*, p. 48 f.

2 H. Beveridge : *Distrct of Bakargonj, op. cit.*, p. 255 f. They are also called "*Kāhār*".

3 James Taylor. *Topography*. p. 244.

4 James Wise. *Eastern Bengal*, p. 34.

5 See *ibid*, p.22.

equality appears to have borne good fruits, as it attracted the teeming multitude of the lower masses, consisting of the illiterate peasantry, the weavers (*Julāhās*), oil-grinders (Kulus) and such other Muslims of Dacca, Faridpur, Jessore and Bakarganj to the *Farā'idī* movement. The fact that Ḥāji Sh͟hari'at Allāh was proverbially reproached by hls opponents as the "*Pīr* of the *Julāhā*" জোলার পীর[1] and that, the *Farā'idīs* were generally ca'led "the sons of *Julāhā*" জোলার খোলা,[2] are, therefore, not without significance; especially, as we now know, that the Ḥāji was the son of a *Talukdār* (*i. e.*, a petty land-holder),[3] and not the son of a *Julāhā* or weaver as claimed by James Wise.[4] According to the current tradition among the *Farā'idīs*, the Ḥāji, at first, changed the family titles of the *Julāhās* and the *Kulus* to *Kārigar* (technician), he called those who could read the *Qur'ān* and had some knowledge of the fundamentals of religion, as "Mullāh"; but later on the *Farā'idīs* were encouraged to drop their family titles altogether. The fact that in the census of A. D. 1872, out of the total 588,522 Muslims of Faridpur 574,740 registered themselves as "unspecified" Muslims, and that, 142 Muslim weavers registered as "Kārigar" against 6,036 of the same caste who registered as "*Julāhā*",[5] lend support to the above tradition.

(c) *The Employment of the Dai* Caste.—The census of A. D. 1872 lists the *Dais* of Faridpur as an exclusive caste of the Muslims. James Wise says that the women-folk of this caste were professional mid-wives, but their number, compared to the great demand of their service, was very small.[6] The profession of *Dai* was, however, considered low, especiallp because of the

1 Tradition current at Faridpur.

2 See *supra.*, Chapter IV.

3 See Chapter III ; also J. E. Gastrell : *Jessore, Fureedpore and Backergunge*, p. 36, no. 151, in which he admits that the Ḥājī possessed a small ancestral estate.

4 James Wise : *Eastern Bangal*, p. 22.

5 See. Appendix "A".

6 See, *ibid.*, where only 195 *Dais* are recorded against the total Muslim population of 588,522 of the district of Faridpur. See also James Taylor: *Topography*, p. 263.

stigma attached to the "cutting of the navel cord" of a new born child. James Wise says that a common term of abuse applied to midwife is "Nār-kātā" or the cutter of the cord.[1] No respectable Hindu or Muslim would, therefore, cut the navel cord, even if they performed other servicees relating to the delivery, in a case of emergency.

The *Farā'iḍīs* held that this prejudical practice was contacted by the Muslims from their Hindu neighbours[2], and was, therefore, a sinful innovation or *bid'ah*. The prejudice against cutting the cord is said to have brought untold hardship to bear upon the mother; for, owing to the scarcity of *Dai* women, notably in the district of Faridpur, the mothers had often to wait for a day or more for the arrival of the *Dai* and to have the navel cord severed. Ḥājī S͟harī'at Allāh protested against the exclusive employment of *Dai* for midwifery, and declared that there was nothidg low in cutting the navel cord, and advised that this might be done by an elderly woman of the family or of the village, and if needs be the father of the baby ought to do it. This raised a considerable opposition from the traditional society, which was later on espoused by Mawlānā Karāmat 'Ali in his debate with K͟halīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār, as will be seen in the next chapter.

(d) *The Dress of the Farā'iḍīs* :—The manner of the dress of the *Farā'iḍīs*, had drawn considerable attention of the English writers, and may be briefly noticed here. Ḥājī S͟harī'at Allāh had advised his followers to wear *Pajama* or *Lungi* instead of wearing *Dhuti*, the national dress of the Hindus, which was, however, generally used by the Muslims of Bengal at that time. He pointed out that the *Pajama* and *Lungi* were more convenient for the daily prayers. It was, however, conceded that if anybody wore *Dhuti* for necessity, he should wear it plainly without passing one end between the legs[3] so as to avoid inconvenience at the

1 James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, p. 50.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 22.

3 For wearing the *Dhuti* in the above manner, the *Farā'iḍīs* were called "Kāchhā Khulā" See *supra.*, Chapter iv.

time of prayer. It is a curious fact that this peculiarity of the *Farā'iḍī* mode of wearing the *Dhuti.* not only attracted the attention of the Englishmen[1], but roused considerable suspicion in their minds. For instance, Hunter observes, "externally a *Faraizi* may be known by the fashion of wrapping his *dhuti* or waist cloth round his loins without crossing it between his legs, so as to avoid any resemblance to a Christian's trousers."[2]

It is needless to point out that the *Pajama*, the Muslim dress has the greatest resemblance to what Hunter calls "Christian trousers", in comparision to which the resemblance of *dhuti* with trousers cannot be judged anything but fictitious. As a matter of fact, this measure was taken by the Ḥājī to ensure that his disciples keep their, thigh covered with dress in accordance with Islamic morality.

Thus, it may be concluded that the *Farā'iḍīs* adhered to the *Ḥanafī* school of law to which almost all Muslims of Eastern Bengal still belong. As such. they followed the doctrinal and legal systems of the *Ḥanafī* school. Hence, in the strict sense, they did not have any principal difference with the rest of their neighbours. The above peculiarities which distinguished them from the rest of the Muslims of Bengal were due to their insistence on puritanism and strict observance of religious tenets especially in an age so well known for laxity and corruption.

1 See H. Beveridge : *Bakarganj*, p. 255 ; W. W. Hunter, ed : *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, vol. iv, p. 399 ; and L. S. S. O'Malley : *Bengal, Bihar and Orissa*, p. 210.

2 W. W. Hunter, ed : *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, p. 399.

CHAPTER VII

TA'AIYYUNĪ OPPOSITION TO THE FARĀ'IḌĪ MOVEMENT

It may be recalled that the nineteenth century religious reform movements, *i. e.*, the *Farā'iḍī*, the *Ta'aiyunī*, *Ahl-i-Ḥadīth* and Patna school struggled side by side and competed with one another in their common pursuit of winning over the *Sābiqis* or the followers of local customs to their respective doctrines. Hence there was occasional conflict among them. Moreover, though all these reform movements rejected the superstitious customs and ceremonies of the *Sābiqī*, yet the *Ta'aiyyunī*, unlike others, appears to have stood for moderation and detested all kinds of radicalism that were characteristic of the *Farā'iḍī*, Patna school and *Ahl-i-Ḥadīth*. The *Ta'aiyyuni* leader Mawlānā Karāmat 'Ali made scathing criticism of the superstitious beliefs and practices of the traditional society on the one hand, and of the radical approaches of the *Farā'iḍi*, Patna school and *Ahl-i-Hadīth* on the other.[1] Nevertheless, the Mawlānā approved in a modified form, some of the traditional ceremonies, such as, *Fātiḥah* (a rite for the death), and *Qiyām* (or standing) in the birth day celebration of the Prophet (*Mīlād*), which were rejected by the three other groups, and wrote several books and pamphlets in vindication of these practices[2].

1 For Mawlānā Karāmat 'Ali's criticism of the traditional customs, see his *Haqq al-Yaqīn, Maqāmi' al-Mubtad'in* and *Mukāshifāt-i-Rāḥmat* published in *Dhakhīrah-i-Karāmat*. vol. I, Calcutts, A.H 1344; and for his criticism of the reformists, see *supra*, Chapter II.

2 Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī's *Quwwat al-Imān* and *Ḥaqq al-Yaqin* may be cited under this category.

Naturally, the upholders of the traditional customs regarded Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī as a champion of their own cause. An examination of the *Ta'aiyyunī* opposition to the *Farā'iḍī* movement is, therefore, important, not only for its own sake, but also because of the fact that the objections of the traditional sociyty to the *Farā'iḍī* movement are reflected in it.

Although Mawlānā Karāmat 'Ali met Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh in A. D. 1836-37, the *Farā'iḍis* and the *Ta'aiyunis* do not appear to have come into direct conflict until A. D. 1839. According to the Mawlānā's own account, he saw the Ḥājī for the first time in A. H. 1252 (A. D. 1836-37), at the Gol Patti Masjid of Calcutta. They had a brief conversation and soon they came to grips. The Mawlānā says that he proposed to the Ḥājī for a public discussion of several controversial points, to which the Ḥājī did not agree and fled at night.[1] From the Mawlānā's account of the meeting, it, however, appears that the topics discussed were of general nature having nothing to do with the *Farā'iḍī* doctrines,[2] yet henceforward the relations between the two leaders were marked with growing antagonism.

Mawlānā Karāmat 'Ali came to Calcutta from Jawnpūr for the first time in A. H. 1250 (A. D. 1835 and remained in Bengal for a period of 18 years, *i. e.*, down to A. D. 1853. During this period, he visited many districts including. Dacca, Faridpur and Bakarganj,[3] the zone of the *Farā'iḍī* influence. In *Muslim Ratnahār* Wazīr 'Alī mentions that the Mawlānā had collided with the *Farā'iḍīs* in B. S. 1245 (A.D. 1839), which falls in the last year of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh's life.[4]

Thus, although there is a probability of the Mawlānā's second meeting with the Ḥājī, such a meeting, in fact, did not take place.

1 Mawlāna Karāmat 'Ali : *Ḥujjat-i-Qāṭi'*, pp. 85-86.

2 *Ibid.*

3 Mawlānā 'Abd al-Bāṭin : *Sīrat-Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī Jawnpūrī*, Ilahabad A.H 1368, p. 53.

4 Wazīr 'Alī : *Muslim Ratnāhār*, p. 9. see Appendix B.

For, after describing his first meeting with the Ḥājī at the Gol Patti mosque, the Mawlānā places his meeting with Dūdū Miyān next and says that he met the Miyān at the residence of Qāḍī Shafī' al-Dīn of Barisal on one Thursday,[1] without specifying the date. According to the *Farā'iḍī* popular tradition such a meeting had taken place during Dūdū Miyān's last stay at Dacca (A.D. 1860-1862) whence he proceeded to Barisal, the headquarters of Bakarganj district, to meet the Mawlānā. This approximation is quite probable, for after a short absence from Bengal in A. D. 1853, the Mawlānā had returned to his missionary activities in Eastern Bengal and Assam for a second time. He says, "this humble person has always been touring from Hindustan to Calcutta, Chittagong and Sandwip on the one hand, and from Dacca to Sylhet on the other, visiting all the towns and villages of the eastern region [Eastern India], in a continuous effort to defend the fundamentals of Islām. In this endeavour over 50 years of my life was passed."[2]

Thus, his second meeting with the *Farā'iḍī* leader, Dūdū Miyān, appears to have been held not earlier than A. D. 1860. No description of this meeting is available from the *Farā'iḍī* sources. The Mawlānā, on the other hand, claims that "after having made humble, Dūdū Miyān promised to attend congregational prayer of *Jum'ah* the next day, but quietly fled at night."[3] In another place, the Mawlānā says that he had challenged Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh and Dūdū Miyān, whom he calls the "leaders of the *Khārijīs* of Bengal", to show the validity of their doctrines on the basis of standard authorities, which they were unable to do.[4] The venue of this challenge was undoubtedly Barisal.

Thereafter Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī had many encounters with the *Farā'iḍī* leaders. He gives an impression that he chased the *Farā'iḍī*

1 Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī : *Ḥujjat-i-Qāṭi'* p. 86.

2 Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī : *Murād al-Mu'minīn*, quoted in Mawlānā 'Abd al-Bāṭin : *Sīrat-i-Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī Jawnpūrī, op. cit.*, p. 45.

3 Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī : *Ḥujjat-i-Qāṭi'*, p. 86.

4 *Ibid.*, see also Mawlānā 'Abd al-Bāṭīn : *Sīrāt, op. cit.*, p. 86.

theologians, especially Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār, from place to place until a public debate (*Baḥth*) was held between them in B. S. 1272 (A. D. 1867).[1] He claims to have met the Khalīfah first at Jhalukati (in the district of Bakarganj) and then at Bayazidpur (in the same district). But on both occasions, the latter fled at night. The Mawlānā met him again at Jhalukati and on this occasion the latter agreed to meet him at a public debate (B. S. 1271/A. D. 1866). The Khalīfah, however, argued that there were no neutral person among the local '*Ulama* who could preside over the debate since most of them were servants of the British government. It was, therefore, decided that each party would prepare a set of *Fatāwā* or legal decisions on six controversial points, *viz.*, (i) relation between faith and work, (ii) the manner of initiation into mystic orders, (iii) employment of midwife or *Dā'i*, (iv) edibility of locust and grasshopper, (v) congregational prayers of *Jum'ah* and *'Id*, and (vi) the definition of *miṣr al-Jāmi'*. This *Fatāwā* would then be submitted to the jurists of Makkah for judgment through the channel of a neutral person, who acting on behalf of both parties would convene a public debate next year at Barisal. Qāḍī Shafī' al-Dīn of Barisal was chosen as the middle-man and the two sets of *Fatāwā* were submitted to him in due course, who forwarded them to Makkah.[2] The ground for the first important debate between the *Farā'iḍis* and the *Ta'aiyunīs* was thus prepared, which took place in A. D. 1867. A second important debate was held in A. D. 1879. Although subsequently many debates were held between them, these two were of paramount importance as they determined once for all the basic lines of their polemics. Fortunately, we have got the full proceedings of the first debate and a good deal of description of the second. But before we go into the details of these proceedings, it is worthwhile to consider an *Ishtihār* (hand-bill) produced by the Mawlānā and circulated widely in Eastern Bengal probably on the eve of the first debate, which has been reproduced by the Mawlānā himself

1 Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī : *Ḥujjat-i-Qāṭi'*, p. 104.

2 Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī : *Ḥujjat-i-Qāṭi'*, p. 85f.

in one of his pamphlets.[1] This *Ishtihār* gives in a nut-shell almost all the objections advanced by him against the *Farā'iḍīs* :

(i) Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī states that the *Farā'iḍīs* regarded work (*'amal*) as a part of faith (*īmān*) and accordingly, to the *Farā'iḍīs*, a person who professed the dogma of faith (*i.e.*, *Kalimah*) but did not observe the daily prayers (*namāz or ṣalāt*,) was a disbeliever (*kāfir*). Hence, they did not hold it lawful to say the funeral prayer for such a person on his death. As this view was the characteristic of the *Khāriji* sect, Mawlānā Karāmat 'Ali identified the *Farā'iḍīs* with the *Khārijīs* and called them "the *Khārijīs* of Bengal."[2]

(ii) Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī accuses the *Farā'iḍīs* of having demolished the pulpit (*mimbar*) of many mosques in order to force their doctrine of the suspension of congregational Friday prayer of *Jum'ah*. He regards the prayers of *Jum'ah* and *'Īd* as the most important institutions of Islām (*sha'ā'ir al-Islām*), which must not be abandoned under any circumstnnces. Hence, the *Farā'iḍīs* were deluded from the right path by their own peculiar views and were also misguiding others[3].

(iii) He contends that the *Farā'iḍīs* were wrong in their objection to the *ṣūfī* custom of clasping by the *pīr* the hand of the *murīd* or disciple at the time of initiation into mystic orders.[4]

(iv) He says that *Farā'iḍīs* held it near obligatory (*wājib*) on the parents to cut off the navel cord of a new born babe, which was, in his opinion, a gross misinterpretation of Islamic law.[5]

1 See *Dhakhīrah-i-Karāmat*, vol. I, Calcutta, A.H. 1344, p. 108.

2 *Cf.* Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī : *Ḥujjat-i-Qāṭi'*, Calcutta, A.H. 1344, pp. 87-88, and "*Ishtihār*" in *Dhakhīrah-i-Karāmat*. vol. I, Calcutta. A.H. 1344, p. 108. It may be noted that the *Khārijī* school was one of the principal contending party against the *sunnī* school of law (*i.e.*, *Ahl-i- Sunnat wa 'l-Jamā'at*) in early Islām (see *Encylopaedia of Islam*, vol. II, pp. 904-908, under the article "Kharīdjites" and vol. IV, pp. 555-57, under the article "Sunna").

3 *Cf.* Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī : *Ishtihār* in *Dhakhirah-i-Karāmat*, p. 108.

4 *Cf.* Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī : "*Ishtihār*" in *Dhakhīrah-i-Kāramat*, p. 108.

5 *Cf* Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī : *Ḥujjat-i-Qāṭi'*, pp. 105-106.

(v) He alleges that the *Farā'idīs* ate grass-hopper by mistaking it for locust.[1]

(vi) He accuses the *Farā'idī* leaders of unlawfully accepting *ṣadaqah fiṭr* (*i. e.*, poor-tax for the *'Īd* festival), from their disciples in spite of their wealthy circumstances.[2]

(vii) He accuses the *Farā'idī* leaders of improperly beating their disciples with shoes as a punishment for all kind of offences.[3]

Debate of Barisal:—On Monday, the 19th Asārh B. S. 1272/ A.D. 1867, thousands of *Farā'idīs* and *Ta'aiyunīs* thronged the Shah Ṣāḥib's Mosque at Barisal, which was chosen as the venue for a debate between Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī and Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār, and the two leaders appeared on the scene accompanied by their retinue of the *'ulama'*. Many respectable citizens of the town (including Mawlawī Muḥammad Fāḍil, the *kutwāl* of the town *i. e.*, Police Officer), were present. Four renowned theologians of Barisal, namely (i) Khān Bahādur 'Abd al-Karīm, (ii) Khān Bahādur Mufīd al-Dīn Muḥammad, (iii) Qāḍi Sirāj al-Dīn Muḥammad, and (iv) Sayyid Tajammul 'Alī were appointed Judges and arbitrators. They formulated six questions on the above-mentioned six controversial points, which were then put to the contending parties one by one[4]:

(i) In the first place, it was asked : "Whether the funeral prayer would be said or not, on the corpse of a person who professed the *kalimah* (or dogma of the faith) but did not observe the daily prayers and the fasting in the *Ramaḍān* ?"[5]

On this point both the parties agreed to the *Hanafī* and *Sunnī* view, and held that such a person was a *fāsiq* or a sinful believer and not a *kāfir* or disbeliever as the *Khārijīs* believed. Therefore, both of them agreed that the funeral prayer was to be said on the corpse of such a person.[6]

1 *Cf.* Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī's "*Ishtihār*" in *Dhakhīrah-i-Karāmat*, p. 108.
2 *Ibid.*
3 *Ibid.*
4 Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī : *Ḥujjat-i-Qāṭi'*, p. 104 f.
5 *Ibid.*
6 *Ibid.*

This implies that the *Farā'iḍīs* do not regard *'amal* or action as an integral part of *Īmān* or faith, as was alleged by Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī, and the Mawlānā's identification of the *Farā'iḍīs* with the *Khārijīs,* therefore, is groundless.

(ii) Secondly, it was asked: "What is your opinion about the custom of clasping by the *pir* the hand of the *murīd* (*i. e.*, disciple) during the ceremony of initiation into *ṣūfī* orders?"[1]

Mawlānā Karāmat 'Ali made a distinction between two kinds of *bay'at* or initiation ceremony, *viz.*, (a) *bay'at-ī-tabarruk i. e.*, initiation with a view to obtaining the blessings of the *pīr*, and (b) *bay'at-i-irādat i. e.*, initiation into deeper mysteries of ṣūfism. He maintained that the former process was open to all, commoners (*'awām*) and the chosen (*khawāṣ*), while the latter process was open to the chosen alone. He further maintained that in the former process (*i. e., bay'at-i-tabarruk*), the *pīr* is lawfully permitted to take the hand of the *murīd* in his own hand. In his opinion, the latter process (*i.e., bay'at-i-irādat*) involved various conditions which a *murīd* (*i. e.*, one desirous for initiation) must fulfil. He, however, did not explain, what these conditions were[2].

Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār questioned the validity of initiating the commoners (*'awām*) into mystic orders. He held that among mystics only those who have successfully passed through all mystic stages and whose high attainments made them *quṭb al-Aqṭāb* (*i. e.*, the pole of the poles), were lawfully permitted to initiate disciples. In order to be eligible for initiation into the mystic orders, the *ṭālib* or the seeker must, on the other hand, possess adequate knowledge of Islamic law and morality (*sharī'ah*) and of the mystic path (*ṭarīqah*). For, in his opinion, it was useless for an ignorant person to be initiated into the mysteries of *ṣūfism* and likewise it was of no use to be initiated by an imperfect mystic whose eyes were not free from the veils.[3]

1 Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī : *Ḥujjat-i-Qāṭi'*, *op. cit.:* p. 104 f.

2 *Ibid.*

3 Mawlawī Karāmat Alī : *Ḥujjat-i-Qāṭi'*, *op. cit.*, p. 104 f.

We have seen earlier that the practice of clasping hand in the initiation ceremony, was opposed by the *Farā'iḍīs*. They called it *dastī bay'at* and denounced it as a sinful innovation. Hence, the *Farā'iḍīs* practised oral or *iqrārī bay'at*.[1] This point appears to have been skipped over by the *Khalīfah* in the debate, as otherwise Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī would not have dropped an important point like this from the proceedings.

(iii) Thirdly, it was asked: "Is it *wājib* (near obligatory) on the parents to cut off the navel cord of a new born babe with their own hands or do you hold a different view ?"[2]

On this point both the parties agreed on principle that cutting of the navel cord was a part of the profession of *qābilah* or midwife and that, it was not *wājib* on the parents to cut off the navel cord with their own hands. But in their interpretation of the term *qābilah* they differed. Mawlāna Karāmat 'Ali interpreted it as meaning *dā'i* (*i. e.*, midwife belonging to the *dā'i* caste), the khalīfah as *dudh pilā'ī* (*i. e.*, wet nurse), and one Mawlawī Ibrāhīm pointed out that the Arabic term "*qābilah*" literally means *dā'i jinā'i* (*i. e.*, professional midwife). To this last interpretation, the Khalīfah also agreed.[3]

In this context, it is necessary to clarify the sense of the word *dā'i-jinā'i*, agreed to by Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār and as identified with the Arabic word "*qābilah*." The latter really applies to the profession of midwifery which can be followed by anybody in the society. The term *dā'i*, derived from the Sanskrit *dhātri*, on the other hand, came to have two meanings in Bengali, *viz.*, (a) midwife and (b) foster mother.[4] Here *dā'i* as a midwife was a Muslim hereditory caste belonging to the lower classes, to which the abusive term *nār kātā* (*i.e.*, the cutter of the navel cord) was applied.[5] But the foster mother or *dūdh pilā'ī*, was a lady of

1 See *supra.*, Chapter vi.

2 Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī : *Ḥujjat-i-Qāṭi'*, *op. cit.*, p. 104 f.

3 *Ibid.*

4 *Cf.* James Wise: *Estern Bengal*, p. 50.

5 See *supra*, Chapter vi.

some respect. The *Farā'iḍīs* raised their fingers against the hereditary caste of the *dā'is* though they had no objection to the profession of a midwife followed in the usual course of life. Hence, it is in the sense of a voluntary profession that Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār agreed with Mawlawī Ibrāhīm on the interpretation of the term *qābilah*.

(iv) Fourthly, it was asked: "Do you identify *tiddī* (*i.e*,, locust) with *bhunge* (*i. e.*, grass-hopper) ? And, do you regard either or both of them as *ḥalāl*[1] (*i. e.*, edible in accordance with the dietary rules of Islām) ?."

Mawlāna Karāmat 'Alī replied that, in his opinion, the locust and the grass-hopper are two distinct species and that the former was lawfully edible and the latter forbidden. The Mawlāna records further in his proceedings of the debate that Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār did not differentiate between the two and regarded both as lawfully edible. According to the same source, the Khalīfah observed : "Should we regard the chicken of Arabia as different from the chicken of Bengal.[2]" It is indeed, reminiscent of James Wise's remark that Dudu Miyān regarded the locust and the grasshopper as belonging to the same species, and passed the latter as lawfully edible on the analogy of the former—the difference in size and figure being explained with reference to the divergent climatic influences, such as visible between the big goats of the bank of River Jumna (in Bengal) and the small ones of the country-side.[3] Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī further reports that the Khalīfah finally stated that any grasshopper, the constitution of which conformed to the description of locust as given in the standard law books, would be regarded as lawfully edible and if it did not conform, it would be regarded as forbidden. The *kutwāl* of the town, thereupon produced a

1 Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī : *Ḥujjat-i-Qāṭi'* p. 104 f.

2 *Ibid.*

3 *Cf.* James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*,p. 23.

grasshopper before them, and asked their opinion about it. Both Mawlānā and the Khalīfah agreed that it was forbidden.[1]

(v) Fifthly, it was suggested by Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī that the question regarding the British rule[2] in India be included in the questionnaire; that is, as to whether this country was *Dār al-Islām* or *Dār al-Ḥarb.* But Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār opposed the move because of the political implications which the discussion of such a problem might entail. The suggestion was, therefore, dropped on the insistence of the Khalīfah, and it was asked, "what is your opinion about the congregational prayers of *Jum'ah* and *'Īd* to be held in Bengal and Hindustan at the present time under the British regime and British administration ?"[3]

Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī replied that under the then prevailing circumstances he regarded the prayer of *'Īd* as *wājib* (near obligatory), *i.e., farḍ-i-'Amalī,* the observance of which is obligatory though strict faith in it may not be enforced ; and that, he regarded the prayer of *Jum'ah* as *farḍ-i-i'tiqādī, i. e.,* in which belief as well as practice are obligatory. Khalīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār disagreed and opined that the congregational prayers were not lawfully permitted in Bengal and Hindustan under the circumstances which prevailed at that time, and maintained that according to certain standard law books, congregational prayers under the then circumstances would be *makrūh-i-taḥrīmah* or near prohibited. The Mawlānā challenged him to prove this point on the basis of the *fatwa* of Makkah, but the Khalīfah replied that the opinion of the Jurist-Consult of Makkah was not sought on the question of *Jum'ah*; his opinion was sought on the question of *miṣr al-Jāmi'* in which the solution of the problem of *Jum'ah* and *'Īd* also lay.[4]

At this stage of the discussion it was evident that in the *fatwā,* which were previously sent to Makkah on mutual-agreement of the parties, the Mawlānā had sought the opinion of the Makkan

1 Mawlawī Karāmat Alī : *Ḥujjat-i-Qāṭi'*, p. 104f.

2 See our discussion of the problem in Chapter vi,

3 Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī : *Ḥujjāt-i-Qāṭi'*, p. 104 f.

4 Mawlawī Karamnt 'Alī : *Ḥujjat-i-Qāṭi'*, p. 104 f.

Jurist-Consult on six points including the question of the congregational prayers, whereas the Khalīfah had sought the opinion on five points only, leaving the question of the congregational prayers to be decided on the basis of the question of the *miṣr al-jāmi'*; for, as we have seen in the preceding chapter, the *Farā'iḍis* believed that the congregational prayers could be held in *Miṣr al-jāmi'* alone. One Ḥājī 'Abd al-Jalīl then produced a *fatwā* of Makkah (probably the one which was sent by Mawlānā Karamat 'Alī for approval), in which it was stated that under the circumstances which then prevailed in India, if the Muslims of a locality appointed an *imām* to lead them in prayer, the prayer of *Jum'ah* was lawfully permitted. Thereupon, addressing the *kutwāl* of the town the Khalīfah observed, "if we appoint an *imām* you would put handcuffs on our hands". The *kutwāl* kept silent, and the discussion on the point was closed[1].

It may be pointed out that the approach of *Ta'aiyuni*s and that of the *Farā'iḍis* to the problem of the congregational prayer were fundamentally different. The former viewed it from the angle of the status of the country. *i.e.*, whether it is *Dār al-Islām* or *Dār al-Ḥrab* ; and the latter viewed it form the angle of the status of the locality in which it is to be held, *i.e.*, whether it is *Miṣr al-jāmi'* or not. Thus, Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī argued that under the British regime, which he termed as " Dār al-Āmān" or State of Security, India was continuing in its former status of *Dār al-Islām*; the congregational prayers were, therefore, lawfully permitted2. The *Farā'iḍis*. on the other hand, argued. that the congregational prayers could not be held except in *miṣr al-jāmi'*. *i.e.*, in a constituted township in which the presence of *Amīr* and *Qāḍī* was necessary; but such *miṣr al-jāmi'* was not found in the then British regime of Bengal. They, therefore, held that the congregational prayers were not lawfully permitted there[3].

1 *Mawlawī* Karāmat 'Alī : *Ḥujjat-i-Qāṭi'*, p, 104 ff.

2 See *supra.*, Chapter vi,

3 See, *supra.*, Chapter vi.

(vi) The sixth and the last question was asked, "how do you define *Miṣr al-jāmi'* (or constituted township) which is a prerequisite for the permissibility of the congregational prayer of *Jum'ah* ? Do you accept either or both the interpretations provided by the *Hidāyah*?[1]"

Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī replied that both the interpretations as provided in the *Hidāyah* were acceptable to him. K͟halīfah 'Abd al-Jabbār said that he gave preference to the first interpretation of the two which demanded the presence of *Amīr* and *Qāḍī*; and that, the second interpretation was unacceptable to him[2].

It may be noticed that the two above-mentioned definitions of *miṣr al-jāmi'* are contradictory to each other, at least, in one important respect; for the first interpretation demands a well-set administration as a necessary condition for *Miṣr al-jāmi'*, whereas the second interpretation is based on a simple enumeration of the inhabitants of a locality. Mawlānā Karāmat 'Ali did not indicate as to how he accepted two contradictory propositions together. We have already seen the reasons of the *Farā'iḍīs* for accepting the first interpretation in preference to the second. In the first

1 Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī : *Ḥujjat-i-Qāṭi'*, p. 104 f. Imām al-Ḥammām S͟hayk͟h Burhān al-Dīn al-Marg͟hīnānī has advanced two interpretations of *miṣr al-jamī'* in his monumental law book *Hidāyah* which were fixed as the term of reference for the discussion on this point. The passage is as follows :

(a) "*Misr al-jami'* are those places where reside the *Amīr* and the *Qāḍi* who enforce civil and criminal laws of Islam, This is the interpretation of Imām Abū Yūsuf",

(b) "According to Imām Abū Ḥanīfah. it is such a locality. where if all its inhabitants *(i.e.,* on whom *Jum'ah* is obligatory) congregate in the biggest of its mosques, it cannot accommodate them all " *(c.f., Hidayah,* p. 148*)*. For a detailed discussion of the controversy of *Jum' ah* aud *Misr al-Jami'*, see Chapter vi.

2 Māwlawī Karāmat 'Alī : *Ḥujjat-i-Qāṭi'*, p. 104 f.

place, the *Farā'iḍis* argued that the first interpretation has also been ascribed to Imām Abū Ḥanīfah; and secondly, another interpretation of Imām Abū Ḥanīfah narrated by Burhān al-Dīn in *Hidāyah*, which demands the presence of an *Amīr* or administrator able to administer justice, was accepted by the *Farā'iḍīs*[1].

The Mawlānā, however, pointed out that the Jurist-Consult of Makkah had laid down in the *fatwā* that both the interpretations as provided in the *Hidāyah* were acceptable. The Khalīfah replied that his rejection of the second interpretation of the *Hidāyah* was based on the evidence of many standard law books. This reply made the Mawlānā angry, and he bluntly challenged the Khalīfah saying "did he (the Jurist-Consult) give an incorrect opinion?" Apparently in order to pacify him, the Khalīfah observed, "the knowledge of the Jurist-Consult is greater than mine. Probably, he has given this opinion on the evidence of some acceptable law books. I agree to that2", Thus, in spite of this face-saving agreement the debate ended in a fiasco.

We have already dealt with the questions of holding congregational prayers and the definition of *Miṣr al-jāmi'* in the preceding chapter, and need not go into further details. What is important to note here is that the underlying difference in the respective approach of the *Farā'iḍīs* and the *Ta'aiyunīs* to the problem of holding congregational prayers. As a matter of fact, the controversy over the prayer of *Jum'ah* was the real bone of contention between them, as the Mawlānā himself observed in course of his debate, "the foundation of the whole debate was laid on the controversy of *Jum'ah*".[3] Even subsequently this controversy never ceased to be a subject of hot debate between them down to the prsent day. For, notwithstanding the fact that the *Farā'iḍīs* have recognised the lawfulness of holding congregational prayers in the towns of East Pakīstan since independence on the plea that the Magistrate and the Judge in the district headquarters, and the Subdivisional

1 See *supra.*, Chapter vi.

2 Mawlawī Karāmat, Alī : *Ḥujjat-i-Qāṭi'*. p. 104 ff.

3 *Ibid.*

Officer and the Munsif in the subdivisional headquarters, have now legally taken the place of *Amir* and *Qāḍi*; they still hold the view that the congregational prayers cannot be lawfully held in the villages or *Qurā* which do not fulfil the conditions of *Miṣr-al-jāmi'*.

It appears from later evidences that the Mawlānā was not satisfied on any of the points debated at Barisal; for, he renewed all his allegations against the *Farā'iḍis* as contained in his *Ishtihār* in course of his subsequent lectures. It is, however, interesting to note that in his *Qawl al-Thābit*, which was not written earlier then A.H. 1289/A.D.1878, he changed his line of attack on the *Farā'iḍi* leaders and described Dudu Miyān and his followers as *Wahhābis* " in reality" instead of calling them the *Khārijis* of Bengal[1].

On the other hand, the debate of Barisal proved a landmark in the development of the *Farā'iḍi* movement. In the first place, this was the first time that the *Farā'iḍis* made, or rather were able to take, a decisive stand against Mawlānā Karamat 'Ali after being chased by the latter from place to place for years. The very fact that Khalifah 'Abd al-Jabbār firmly stood his ground against the attack of a person of Mawlānā Karāmat 'Ali's calibre, indicated a significant progress in the intellectual growth of the *Farā'iḍis* too. Secondly, the *Farā'iḍi* polemic being once formulated by the Khalifah, was quickly grasped by the educated section of the *Farā'iḍis*. A *Farā'iḍi Fatwā* on the problem of holding congregational prayer, written in Arabic and Urdu, was subsequently published and distributed among the local *Khalifahs*, and the *Farā'iḍi* points of view were further elaborated in popular *Puthis* written by the *Farā'iḍis* in Bengali language[2].

The debate of Barisal had focussed the gaze of the multitudes on the problem of *Jumā'ah* and marked the beginning of a new

1 Mawlawi Karāmat Ali: *Qawl al-Thābit*, p. 4.

2 See, Chapter i, "*Farā'iḍi* Sources".

era of debate on this topic, not only between the *Farā'iḍīs* and the *Ta'aiyunīs*, but also, between the *Farā'iḍis* and the followers of the local customs. One such important debate took place, as we have seen earlier, at Madaripur in A.D. 1879, between Ḥāfiz Aḥmad (son of Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī) and Nayā Miyān, which Navin Chandra Sen described as *Jumār Yuddha* or the battle of *Jum'ah*[1]. Another important debate on the subject was held in B.S. 1309/A.D. 1903, at Dawud Kandi between the *Farā'iḍīs* and the followers of the local customs[2].

1 See, *supra.*, Chapter v.

2 *Cf.* Durr-i-Muhammad : *Puthi*, p. **123** f. and Nāẓim al-Dīn : *Puthi*, p. **98** f.

CHAPTER VIII

SOCIAL ORGANISATION OF THE FARĀ'IḌĪS

The biographical sketch of the *Farā'iḍī* leaders discussed earlier gives us an insight into the nature of the gradual evolution of the movement itself. Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh based his plan of reform on purely religious principles. But his son Dudu Miyān added a new feature, giving a socio-economic bias to the movement. The pattern of the then Muslim society as described by the contemporary English writers needed such an evolution to rest the movement on a solid foundation.[1] It is, therefore, necessary to examine the organisational principles as laid down by Dudu Miyān.

It may be recalled that although the *Farā'iḍīs* were *Ḥanafī* and like the vast majority of the Bengali Muslims followed the *Ḥanāfī* school of law, yet a few peculiar doctrines which they developed gave their movement a distinctive character. Naturally, the *Farā'iḍī* movement fostered a community of beliefs and interests among its followers, which brought them into a common platform and unified them into a brotherhood. The unifying tendency of the *Farā'iḍīs* became apparent even at the initial stage when Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh preached his doctrines at Nayabari. The sense of growing unity among his followers, according to James Wise, alarmed the Hindu *Zamīndārs*, and as a result, he was expelled from the place.[2]

1 See for instance, "A Police Report of the Zilah Dacca-Jalalpur dealing with the manners and morals of the people, dated A.D. 1799", (edited by the present writer), *Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society*, vol. vii, part I, Karachi, January, 1959, pp. 24-35 ; and James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, p. 6 f.

2 James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, p. 22.

The current tradition in the *Farā'iḍī* settlement of Rekabi Bazar[1] credits Ḥāji Sharī'at Allāh for organising the local *Panchāyat* there. But he is not known to have attempted to bring the *Farā'iḍīs* into a compact organisation. In all appearance, it was Dudu Miyān who first realised the necessity, or conceived the ambitious plan of organising the *Farā'iḍīs* into a strong body and it was he who brought them under a central and hierarchical organisation. As James Wise holds, the credit of organising the *Farā'iḍī* society, therefore, goes to Dudu Miyān[2].

In organising the *Farā'iḍī* society Dudu Miyān had two main objectives in view, *viz.*, (i) protecting the *Farā'iḍī* peasantry from the oppression of the Hindu *zamīndārs* and European indigo planters, and (ii) securing social justice for the masses of the Muslims. In order to secure the first objective, he raised a volunteer corps of clubmen and arranged for their regular training in the art of affray fighting. For securing the second objective he revived the traditional *Panchāyat* system under *Farā'iḍī* leardership. The former was known as the political branch (*siyāsī*) and the latter, the religious branch (*dīnī*). Both these branches of the *Farā'iḍī* organisation were then co-ordinated by an hierarchical *khilāfat* system, which brought all the *Farā'iḍīs* of Eastern Bengal under direct control and supervision of Dudu Miyān.

Siyāsī or political branch : The political branch of the *Farā'iḍī* organisation was an outcome of the conflict between the *Farā'iḍī* peasantry and the Hindu *zamīndārs.* We have seen earlier that Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh protested against the imposition of idolatrous cesses by the Hindu *zamindārs* on the *Farā'iḍī* peasantry, which brought him into conflict with the *zamindārs* in his later life[3] According to a government report, the *zamīndārs* levied not less than 23 items of unauthorised cesses in addition to the lawful land

1 Rekabi Bazar is in the Munshiganj subdivision of Dacca district, visited by the present writer in 1958.

2 James Wise ; *Eastern Bengal*, p. 23.

3 See *supra.*, Chapter iii, p. 17 ff.

revenues as late as A.D. 1872[1]. In order to resist the *zamīndārs* from extorting these cesses, Ḥājī S͟harī'at Allāh commissioned Jalāl al-Dīn Mullāh to organise affray fighters[2]. James Wise says that Dudu Miyān made his "most determined stand" against the "levying of illegal cesses by the *zamīndārs*", especially against the idolatrous taxes. Wise considers it as an intolerable act of oppression that "a Muḥammadan ryot should be obliged to contribute towards the decoration of the image of Durga (a Hindu goddess), or towards the support of any of the idolatrous rites of the Hindu landlord", as the "only apology" for their continuation was claimed to be their "antiquity and adaptation to the feelings of the people"[3]. Thus, the conflict between the *Farā'iḍīs* and the *zamīndārs* arose from a peculiar religio-economic reason. This was instrumental to Dudu Miyān's realisation of the necessity of organising the *Farā'iḍīs* into a strong body.

On his assumption of leadership, Dudu Miyān appointed several *siyāsī khalīfahs* (*i.e.*, political agents or deputies) in different parts of the Faridpur district (including Madaripur subdivision), where the *zamīndārs* were specially hostile to the *Farā'iḍīs*. The duty of the *siyāsī k͟halīfah* was to raise volunteer corps of affray fighters and to arrange for their regular training ; and secondly, to keep Dudu Miyān fully apprised of every new political development of his area. Later on, when the *dīnī* or religious branch of the *Farā'iḍī* organisation was developed into a centralised and hierarchical *k͟hilāfat* system, the political branch was also absorbed into it, as will be seen below.

Farā'iḍī k͟hilāfat system : The *Farā'iḍī k͟hilāfat* system was designed to bring all the *Farā'iḍīs* under the direct control and supervision of an hierarchy of authorised agents or *k͟halīfahs*. At the apex of this hierarchy stood the *Ustād* (*i.e.*, the head of the *Farā'iḍīs*) ; below him were the *Uparasta k͟halīfahs* (or the superior

1 See Appendix " C ".
2 See *supra.*, Chapter iv, p. 25.
3 *Cf.* James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, p. 24.

agents); next to them were the Superintendent *khalīfah*; and at the lowest rung of the hierarchy stood the *Gāon khalīfah* (village agent) or the Ward *khalīfah* (the agent in the ward of a town), as the case may be. The *Farā'iḍī* settlements of Eastern Bengal were divided into small village units, each consisting of 300 to 500 *Farā'iḍī* families as the geographical conditions permitted. One prominent member of each unit was appointed a *khalīfah* and given the charge of the unit. Ten or more such village units formed what was often called a *gird* (*i.e.*, a circle or neighbourhood), which was under one Superintendent *khalīfah*. The respective unit *khālīfahs* of the area were subordinated to him.[1] The Superintendent *khalīfah* was required to maintain a *Piyādah* (*i.e.*, a guard or footman), and a Peon (or messenger). The *Piyādah* worked as the executor of orders of the Superintendent *khalīfah*; and the Peon was sent back and forth with messages and circulars to the unit *khalīfahs* of the *gird* on the one hand, and to the *Ustād* at Bahadurpur (in Faridpur district) on the other. Thus, the Superintendent *khalīfah* acted as an intermediary between the unit *khalīfah* and the *Ustād*, and kept in constant touch with both.

A few highly competent persons were appointed as advisers to the *Ustād*, who were styled as *Uparastha* or Superior *khalīfahs*. Such were, for instance, the guardians of Nayā Miyān[2]. Their functions were multifarious: to advise the *Ustād* on important matters, guide the *Farā'iḍī* community, propagate *Farā'iḍī*

1 Family records of (a) Jalāl al-Dīn Mullāh of Faridpur, *khalīfah* of Dudu Miyān, and of his grandson Kafīl al-Dīn Aḥmad, *khalīfah* of Khān Bahādur Sa'īd al-Dīn; and (b) tradition current in the Family of Darwesh 'Alī Munshī of Tippera, *khalīfah* of Dudu Miyān (c) of Munīr al-Dīn Khalīfah, and (d) Pahlwān Ghāzī of Chandpur, *khalīfahs* of Dudu Miyān. See also James Wise: *Eastern Bengal*, p. 23. Wise suggests that in partitioning Eastern Bengal into smaller units or circles, Dudu Miyān followed the Vaishnava practice, but he did not state his reasons for thinking so. On the other hand, we know very well that assigning a certain area to a *khalīfah* is a time-honoured practice of the *ṣūfī* orders, famliar to Bengal for centuries.

2 See *supra.*, Chapter v, p. 49 f.

doctrines and promote the advancement of the *Farā'iḍī* movement. Some of them were assigned a particular subdivision or a district but mostly they worked as personal envoys of the *Ustād* to the *Farā'iḍī* community in general[1].

Functions of the Unit Khalīfah : The Unit *khalīfah* being responsible for the overall welfare of the *Farā'iḍī* community residing within the unit, his duties were, and still are, manifold. In the first place, he taught them the *kalimah* or the formula of faith[2], and the *dīniyāt* or the religious practices. Secondly, he enforced the *farā'iḍ* or religious duties, such as, the daily prayers, fasting of the *Ramaḍān*, payment of *zakāt* and *fiṭrah*. Thirdly he made suitable arrangement for prayer-halls in those places where no mosque existed and led the community prayers or appointed an *imām* for the purpose. Fourthly, he controlled the social and religious morals of his community, and administered justice in consultation with the elders. Fifthly, he administered religious services at the weddings and funerals, and shrived a dying man. Lastly, he maintained a *Maktab* or elementary school for the education of the children[3].

As a remuneration for all these duties, he received a sort of *'ushar* or tithe from the produce of the land belonging to the *Farā'iḍīs* of his unit. The rate was, however, one-fortieth *i.e.*, equivalent to the rate of *zakāt*[4].

1 The above picture of the structure of the *Farā'iḍī* organisation has been drawn from the family records of the *Farā'iḍīs* and from personal observation. The practice of appointing *Uparastha Khalīfah* has fallen into disuse ; but the rest of the hierarchy as well as the maintenance of a *Piyādah* and a *Peon* continue down to the present day.

2 The *kalimah* is a short formula in Arabic consisting of two phrases, *i.e.*, اشهدان لااله الاالله واشهدان محمدالرسول الله which means, I give witness that there is no God but Allāh, and that Muḥammad is the Prophet of Allāh.

3 Based on family records and personal observation.

4 This is still practised in the *Farā'iḍī* villages of Chandpur in the district of Tippera.

The functions of the Unit *khalifah* were, and still are, purely religious. He is required to keep himself aloof from politics. He must, however, take notice of all political developments in his unit, and report regularly to the Superintendent *khalīfah*. He is also empowered to settle petty disputes relating to marriage, divorce, inheritance, domestic or public quarrels, feuds over land or over any other property. This he does with the help of the elders of his unit.

Functions of the Superintendent Khalifah : The duties of a Superintendent *khalīfah* were by no means an easy job. In him was vested the religious as well as the political leadership of his *gird*. In the first place, he was required to watch closely the activites of the Unit *khalifahs*, guide their steps and check excesses. The inhabitants of the *gird* were entitled to lodge complaint against any oppression or excess of the Unit *khalifahs* to the Superintendent *khalīfah* and seek for redress of any injury or harm done to them. Secondly, he acted as the court of appeal against the decision of the Unit *khalifahs* to which the disputants were entitled to take resort if they were not satisfied with any decision of a Unit *khalifah*. Such appeal suits were retried by the Superintendent *khalīfah* sitting in a council of the Unit *khalīfahs* of his *gird*. Thirdly, he was responsible for social and spiritual welfare of the *Farā'iḍis* of his *gird*, and was required to pay frequent visit to different localities and preach the fundamentals of religion. He had also to maintain an *Astānā* or a religious club in his own locality which was used as the venue for community prayers, public meetings, religious conferences and other functions of the community. When the *Ustād* or any other honourable guest came to visit the *gird*, the *Astānā* was used as the rest house. Moreover, as the *Farā'iḍis* followed the *Qādiriyah* order of sufism, mystic meditation (*ḥalqah dhikir*) was held in the *Astānā* on every Wednesday night. Fourthly, he was required to take active interest in the political development (*siyāsī mu'āmilāt*) of his *gird*, in addition to his religious duties. If, however, he preferred to remain absorbed in religious affairs, a *siyāsī khalīfah* (political

agent) was appointed for the area cancerned. With the assistance of the *Piyādah* and the Peon, he kept himself in touch with every political development and kept the *Ustād* apprised of the situation through regular post. Fifthly, he was required to visit every locality of his *gird* once a year and see that the *Farā'iḍīs*, one and all, had adequate knowledge of the fundamentals of religion. Lastly, the Superintendent *khalīfahs* of Faridpur district, were required to raise a volunteer corps of clubmen and arrange for their regular training. This special measure was deemed necessary in the district of Faridpur, where the *zamīndārs* and the *gomastahs* were hostile to the *Farā'iḍī* movement[1].

Uparastha Khalīfah and the Ustād : Records of all transactions of the Unit *khalīfah* and the Superintendent *khālīfah* were kept in books of proceedings. When the *Ustād* or the *Uparastha khalīfah* came to visit the *gird* the proceedings were presented to him. If he approved of them, he put his signature and seal on them. If he did not approve, he would direct that the proceedings be sent to Bahadurpur for further examination. In all important matters the advice and interference of the *Ustād* were eagerly sought by the local *khalīfahs*. In all religious and secular matters the *Ustād* was the final authority, and his decision was binding. If any party was not satisfied with the decision of the Superintendent *khalīfaḥ*, an appeal lay with the *Ustād*. In such cases, the *Ustād*, would fix a date for the hearing, and summon the Superintendent *khalīfah* and the parties concerned to Bahadurpur. In complicated cases an *Uparastha khalīfah* was sent to the spot to hear the appeal and to give appropriate judgment in the capacity of being personal envoy of the *Ustād*[2].

The *Farā'iḍīs* were not allowed to bring any dispute or legal suit before the government court without obtaining permission from the Superintendent *khalīfah* or the *Ustād*. The *non-Farā'iḍīs*

1 Based on family records and personal observations, corroborated by James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, p. 23 f. and Navin Chandra Sen : *Amār Jīvan*, *op. cit.*, vol. iii, p. 149 f.

2 *Idem.*

(Muslim and non-Muslim alike) having a dispute with the *Farā'iḍī* were encouraged to bring the case before a *Farā'iḍī* court instead of taking it to the government court, and if anyone ventured to take such a case to the law courts, the enforcement of the decree was resisted by the powerful *Farā'iḍī khalīfahs* especially if it went against the interests of a *Farā'iḍī*[1].

Further examination of the khilāfat system : The above sketch of the *Farā'iḍī khilāfat* system which has been drawn mainly from the family records of the *Farā'iḍī khalīfahs* and from personal observation of the present day *Farā'iḍī* society, is corroborated by the contemporary writings, especially by those of James Wise, Navin Chandra Sen, Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī and H. Beveridge. But, as their account of the *Farā'iḍī* society is partial and in many respects misleading, their views cannot be wholly relied upon. James Wise says :[2]

"Following the example of the *Vaishnavas*[3], he [Dudu Miyān] partitioned Eastern Bengal into circles, and appointed a *khalīfah* or agent to each, whose duties were to keep the sect together, make proslytes, and collect contributions for the furtherance of the object of the association. They further kept Dudu Miyān...acquainted with every occurrence within their jurisdiction".

He further adds that Dudu Miyān settled disputes, administered summary justice and punished any Hindu, Muslim or Christian

1 *cf.* James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, p. 25 ; and Navin Chandra Sen : *Amār Jīvan*, vol. iii, p. 149.

2 *cf.* James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, p. 23.

3 In his analogy of the *Farā'iḍī khilāfat* system with the *Vaishnava* organisation, James Wise appears to have been misled by the apparent similarity between the two. For, the *khilāfat* system including various gradations of the *khalīfahs* and the assignment of an exclusive area to each, was not a new invention of Dudu Miyān but derived from the time-honoured practice of the *ṣūfīs*, which was in vogue in the Muslim society of Indo-Pakistan subcontinent even centuries before the advent of Vaishnavism. No wonder, therefore, that we find an organisation amongst the followers of the Patna school at Maldah which is almost similar to the *Farā'iḍī khilafat* system (see W. W. Hunter : *Indian Musalmans*. London, A.D. 1971, pp. 81-82).

who dared to bring a suit for recovery of debt in the adjoining *Munsif's* court instead of referring the case to his decision[1]. With regard to the influence of the *Farā'iḍī Panchāyat* over the masses of the people, Wise says : "These *Panchāyats* [of Eastern Bengal] posses great influence among the people and in *Farā'iḍī* villages as they take cognizance of all offences, it is exceedingly rare that any case of violence or assault, committed within them finds its way to the regular courts"[2].

In the autobiography of Navin Chandra Sen, we find a detailed account of the actual working of the *Farā'iḍī* society in the time of Nayā Miyān. The following translation of a passage from Bengali into English will illustrate the point. Navin Sen says, "the majority of the *ra'iyats* of Eastern Bengal, notably of the district of Faridpur, are *Farā'iḍī* Muslims. They accept the words of Nayā Miyān as divine revelation, and such slavish submission to the preast is not seen in any other human race. In this area [the subdivision of Madaripur], Nayā Miyān established a State of his own within the British regime. In every village, he appointed a superintendent and a *Piyādah* through whom he kept the *Farā'iḍīs* in his control. No dispute of the village could be submitted to the *Diwānī* or *Fawzdārī 'Adālat* [*i.e.*, the civil and the criminal courts established by the Government], without the permission of the superintendent[3]."

He adds further[4], "at first, the case was tried by him and then if he accorded permission it could be submitted to the Police or brought before the Law Courts. If anybody acted to the contray, he was brande as a renegade from religion or *kāfir*[5]. As a result, to

1 James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, p. 25.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 34.

3 Navin Chandra Sen : *Amār Jīvan, op. cit.*, vol. iii, p. 149.

4 Navin Chandra Sen : *Amār Jīvan, op. cit.*, vol. iii, p. 149.

5 Navin Sen appears to have confused between a renegade from the *Farā'iḍī* movement and one from the religion of Islam. It is true that the *Farā'iḍīs*

(*Continued on page* 113)

whichever party of the dispute the superintendent lent his support, it would usually come out victorious even if it were on the wrong side. People would give false witness at his bidding, and when he went against anybody his case could never be proved even if the accusations were true. For, the Police and the Judge were helpless in eliciting any evidence in favour of the case...Even if a person secured a decree from the Law Court on a piece of land, having spent a considerable sum, he was powerless to take possession of it if the superintendent went against him".

One of the arguments of Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī against the *Farā'iḍīs* was that since the *Farā'iḍīs* had established a sort of their own regime in Eastern Bengal, they had no excuse to shrink from the prayer of Jum'ah. He says, "ask them : Whereas you have established the custom of administering justice among your disciples, and whereas you punish them by giving shoes and imposing fines to the extent of one hundred stroke, and one or two hundred rupees, and as these disciples still do not bring their complaint before any of the Judges [appointed by the British], what excuse has remained there, in accordance with your own principles, to refrain from saying the prayer of *Jum'ah* within the regime of your elected *Amīr*? "[1].

In his account of influential personalities of Bakarganj district, H. Beveridge says, "if I were to mention non-officials, there are at least two who have exercised more influence than any judge or magistrate. I refer to the Maḥomedan preachers named Karāmat 'Ali and Dudu Miyān[2]".

If the above evidence is true, it must be conceded that Dudu Miyān's effort to organise the *Farā'iḍī* society was crowned with

(*Continued from page* 112)

ostracised a renegade but never branded such a person as renegade from Islam or *kāfir*, for, they also professed themselves to be *Ḥanafī* and followers of *Ahl al-sunnat wa'l jamā'at* like the most *non-Fārā'iḍī* Muslims of Eastern Bengal.

1 Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī : *Ḥujjat-i-Qāṭi'*, p. 107.

2 H. Beveridge : *District of Bakargonj, op. cit.*. p. 381.

success. For, he was not only able to bring millions of the *Farā'iḍīs* under his direct control by means of the *khilāfat* system, but was also successful in securing social justice for them and in safeguarding their interests from the oppressive hands of the Hindu *zamīndārs*, European indigo planters and their underlings. In organising the *Farā'iḍī* society, Dudu Miyān laid down the principle of equality and brotherhood, the influence of which on the *Farā'iḍī* society was far-reaching. This principle is discussed below.

Principle of equality and brotherhood : James Wise says that Dudu Miyān asserted "the equality of mankind" and "taught that the welfare of the lowest and the poorest was as much an object of interest as that of the highest and the richest"[1]. He further declared all men as brothers, and pleaded that when a brother fell into distress, it was the "duty of his neighbours to assists him"[2]. According to government reports, the equality of the *Farā'iḍīs* was "again and again emphasised"[3], and a common fund was created for the welfare of the brotherhood[4].

Furthermore, following the Qur'ānic verse "Whatever is in the heavens and in the earth belongs to God"[5], Dudu Miyān declared that land is a bounty of God, and man being His most favoured creature has equal right to exploit this divine gift. Land, therefore, belongs to those who exploit it. Hence, he regarded the exploitation of the peasantry by the *zamīndār's* as a gross injustice (*ẓulm*)[6].

Dudu Miyān, however, did not oppose the levying of taxes by the government. He only challenged the right of the

1 James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, p. 24.

2 *Ibid.*

3 *Selections from the Records of the Bengal Governmeut*, vol. xiii, *Trial of Aḥmadullah*, p. 141.

4 See, James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, p. 23.

5 *Qur'ān* : 2 : 129 ; 4 : 131.

6 Tradition current in the family of Dudu Miyān. See also James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, p. 24.

zamīndār to impose illegal and idolatrous cesses on the cultivators. For, he regarded the *zamīndārs* as merely tax collectors of the government. Hence, in his view, they were competent to realise only the land revenues authorised by the government. But, as the laws provided by the Permanent Settlement were prejudicial to the *zamīndārs*, "the peasantry were persuaded to settle on *Khāṣ Maḥal* lands managed directly by the government" and thus to escape "the payment of any taxes but that of the land revenue claimed by the State"[1].

Nevertheless, the bulk of the *Farā'iḍīs* had to live within the jurisdiction of the *zamīndārs*, and the latter often found excuse to attach their lands for non-payment of taxes or to bring civil suits against them for disowning them from their tenancy rights. Whenever the *zamīndārs* tried to enforce their so-called legal rights against the *Farā'iḍīs*, funds were provided by Dudu Miyān from the common purse for the defence of the ryots and even to sue the *zamīndārs* in the Law Courts ;[2] "or if it could be safe", says Wise, "clubmen were sent to destory his *[zamīndār's]* property and the servants"[3].

1 James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, p. 24,

2 Tradition current in the family of Dudu Miyān. See also James Wise: *Eastern Bengal*, pp. 23-24.

3 James Wise : *Eastern Bengal*, p. 24.

CHAPTER IX

GEOGRAPHY OF THE FARĀ'IḌĪ MOVEMENT

Although the paucity of materials renders it difficult to ascertain the areas where the *Farā'iḍī* movement was effective, yet a few contemporary accounts throw considerable light on the tempo of its progress. However inadequate, these sources give us a general idea of its geography and population.

The earliest mention of the *Farā'iḍī* movement is found in a *Robakārī* of the Magistrate of Dacca Jalalpur,[1] dated the 29th April, 1831. It shows that Ḥājī Sharī'at Allah was at that time propagating his doctrines among the peasantry of Ramnagar near Nayabari, in the modern village of Charigram in Dacca district. His conflict with the local Muslims and the Hindu *zamīndārs*, which resulted in his expulsion from the village[2], indicates that by that time he did not succeed in gaining a good number of followers.

In A. D. 1837, a Hindu gentleman of Dacca reports in *Darpan* (a local Bengali newspaper), that Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh had about 12,000 weaver and Musalman disciples in the district of Faridpur and had become the most powerful man in the area. A few incidents referred to in the same report indicate that the Hindu *zamīndārs* were beginning to feel their inability to cope with the *Farā'iḍīs* either in the contest of physical power or in the law courts. The writer states that Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh had become much more powerful than his predecessor Titu Mīr and that his influence on the clerks and pleaders of the Faridpur court was

1 See *J.A.S.P.*, Vol. vi, 1961, pp. 123-24.

2 See *supra.*, Chap. iii, p. 13 ff.

extensive[1]. The venue of his activities was at that time, Bahadurpur, a village in the Sibchar Thana[2], where Dudu Miyān settled later on.

James Taylor, a contemporary of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh states in A. D. 1839 that the *Farā'iḍī* movement spread with "extra-ordinary rapidity" in the districts of Dacca, Faridpur, Bakarganj and Mymensingh[3]. In A. D. 1843, the head of the Bengal Police described Dudu Miyān as a leader at the head of 80,000 men[4]. In A. D. 1847, the *Farā'iḍīs* are noticed by the editor of the *Calcutta Review* as a very powerful sect. He says that they abound in the districts of Dacca, Faridpur and Bakarganj.[5] J. E. Gastrell, a comtemporary of Dudu Miyān observes that the majority of the Muslims of Faridpur were *Farā'iḍīs* and they formed an important part of the Muslim population of the neighbouring districts, *i. e.* Dacca, Bakarganj and Jessore. He adds further that down to A. D. 1862, their number was "steadily increasing"[6].

The next important report is found in the autobiography of Navin Chandra Sen, who was posted as the Subdivisional Officer of Madaripur in A. D. 1879. In his opinion, the majority of the Muslim peasantry of Eastern Bengal, notably of the district of Faridpur were *Farā'iḍīs*[7]. Mawlānā Karāmat 'Ali, who passed his life in touring Eastern India (A. D. 1835-1874) also testifies that the *Farā'iḍī* movement spread extensively in the towns of Dacca, Faridpur and Bakarganj and in the rural areas attached to them[8].

1 *Cf.* Brajendranath Bandopadhay ed., *Sambād Patre Sekāler* Kathā, Calcutta, B.S. 1342, Vol. iii, pp. 311-12.

2 *Ibid.*

3 *Cf.* James Taylor : *Topography, op. cit.*, pp., 248—50.

4 See *supra.*, Chap. iv, p. 30.

5 *Ibid.* p. 31.

6 *Cf.* J.E. Gastrell, *Jessore, Fureedpore and Backergunge, op. cit.*, p. 36.

7 See *supra.*, Chap. v, p. 51.

8 Mawlawī Karāmat 'Alī "Ishtihār" in *Dhakhīrah-i-Karāmat*, Vol. i, p. 108.

It may also be noted that the *Farā'iḍī* movement spread in Tippera during the life time of the Ḥājī[1].

As the *Farā'iḍīs* did not register themselves in the census as a separate sect, their statistical position cannot be ascertained. In A. D. 1885, Hunter says, " the reforming faith of the *Farā'iḍīs* has spread rapidly through the district " of Dacca and that though they were mainly engaged in cultivation, many of them were also " engaged in trade—dealing in rice, jute, hides and tobacco "[2]. He describes the Muslims of Noakhali district as belonging " almost without exception to the *sunni* sect " and " most of them " as *Farā'iḍīs*[3]. Likewise, the Muslims of Nadiya district are described in the *Gazetteer* as a " powerful *Farā'iḍī* or *Wahabi* community "[4]. About A. D. 1886, the *Farā'iḍī* movement was also exerting considerable influence in the district of Pabna in North Bengal[5]. In A. D. 1908, the *Chittagong Gazetteer* records some extent of progress of the *Farā'iḍī* movement in that district and its attainment to " great strength in Eastern Bengal "[6]. In the *Statistical Account of Assam* (A.D. 1879), considerable progress of the *Farā'iḍī* movement has also been reported by Hunter. In the districts of Sylhet, Goalpara, Lakhimpur, Sibchar, Darang and Kamrup, there were many *Farā'iḍīṣ* among the Muslim population, who, as a community, were generally well off[7].

J. E. Gastrell, who was engaged in the survey of the districts of Jessore, Faridpur and Bakarganj from A. D. 1856 to 1862, ascribes a riverine character to the *Farā'iḍī* movement. He observes that the *Farā'iḍīs* were especially numerous along the river banks and that the banks of Madhumatī, Navaganga,

1 See *infra.*, Appendices E and F.

2 W. W.Hunter ed. : *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, 1885, Vol. iv, p. 339 f.

3 *Ibid.*, Vol. x, p. 344.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 134.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 514.

6 *Cf. East Bengal District Gazetteers, Chittagong*, Calcutta, 1908, p. 56.

7 W.W. Hunter : *Statistical Account of Assam*, London, 1879, Vol. i, pp. 39, 188, 245 ; and Vol. ii, pp. 47 and 283.

Barakur and Haringhata practically belonged to them[1]. A field-study of the *Farā'iḍī* settlements (undertaken by the present writer in 1958 and 1959) and the data supplied by the *Farā'iḍī* family traditions indicate that the Bhuvaneshwar-Arialkhan river beds[2] were the main route through which the *Farā'iḍī* missionaries moved back and forth and spread their doctrines.

Bhuvaneshwar river being the off-shoot of the Padma river, the *Farā'iḍīs* could make easy contact with the northern and eastern districts, namely Mymensingh, Dacca, Tippera and Pabna through Padma, Jamuna and Meghna rivers. On the other hand, as the Arialkhan river falls into the Padma and flows southwards into the sea, the coastal sides of Chittagong and Noakhali were also accessible to them through Bay of Bengal. Moreover, as Gastrell testifies, the *Farā'iḍīs* made contact with the western parts of the districts of Faridpur and the eastern parts of the districts of Jessore and Khulna through Haringhata and Madhumati rivers[3]. Naturally, the *Farā'iḍī* movement spread extensively over these

1 J.E. Gastrell : *Jessore, Fureedpore and Backergunge*, Calcutta, 1868, p. 36, Nos. 150 and 151.

2 It may be noted that the Bhuvaneshwar-Arialkhan form a continuous river-bed, which, a few centuries back, was the channel for the waters of Padma (Ganges), and is still the main artery of the Faridpur district. The Bhuvaneshawar river branching out from Padma at a little distance east of Faridpur town, flows zigzag in a south-easterly direction towards Sibchar, where Shamail, the native village of Ḥājī S̲harī'at Allāh and Bahadurpur, the native village of his successors, are located. At Sibchar, it takes the name of Arialkhan and divides itself into two streams, one flowing to the left and the other to the right, but both in a semicircular direction, to meet again at a little distance from the Madaridpur town. From there it flows almost parallel to the river Padma and goes to Barisal town in the Bakarganj district. During the life-time of Ḥājī S̲harī'at Allāh, it flowed by the side of his native village Shamail and was at that time popularly known as Padma. Thus, Bhuvaneshwar-Arialkhan rivers connected the villages of the *Farā'iḍī* leaders with the town of Faridpur on the one side and with the town of Barisal on the other providing extensive opening to different parts of Eastern Bengal.

3 It may be noted that Haringhata and Madhumati rivers run in a continuous stream between the district of Faridpur on the one hand and Khulna and Jessore on the other and flowing north-to-south connects Padma with the sea.

riverine areas. In this connection, it may also be noted that during the rainy season, greater parts of the districts of Faridpur, Bakarganj, Dacca, Tippera, Pabna and Noakhali go under standing flood water, which facilitates easy access by small boats[1]. The family traditions of the *Farā'iḍī* leaders show that Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh, Dudu Miyān and Khān Bahādur Sa'id al-Din almost always travelled by boats. The reverine condition of the country was also the reason why Mawlānā Karāmat 'Ali and his successors preferred boat journey while going on their errant of preaching in Eastern Bengal.

Another feature which is noticeable in the spread of the *Farā'iḍī* movement is the thoroughness with which it was propagated. Hence, wherever conversion took place, it was wholesale. Such was the case, for instance, in the Madaripur subdivision of Faridpur, Chandpur subdivision of Tippera and the village Rekabi Bazar in Dacca. On the other hand, little or no attempt was made to extend the *Farā'iḍī* influence outside of Eastern Bengal. In fact, the existence of a good number of *Farā'iḍīs* (at the close of the nineteenth century) in Assam, Agartala State and Chittagong Hill Tract is accounted for by the migratory activities of the Muslims of Mymensingh and Tippera districts to these outer regions. In the absence of such migratory activity of the *Farā'iḍīs* to West Bengal, the movement did not spread there at all.

1 It may also be noted that Faridpur and Bakarganj (the native districts of the *Fara'iḍī* leaders) are riverine districts where boat is the main means of communication. On account of this riverine condition, railways could not be introduced in Bakarganj and about Faridpur, J.C. Jack says that there must be very few spots "from which a journey of a single mile in any direction will not be obstructed by a stream of water course" (*cf. Final Report on the Survey and Settlement Operations in the Faridpur District, 1904-1914.* Calcutta, 1916, p. 6). Moreover, about the distribution of population of Faridpur district, L.S.S. O'Malley says, "It may be predicated as a rough generalisation that the Muḥammadans predominate in the riverside lands and *chars* and the Hindus in the inland marshes" (*cf. Bengal District Gazetteers, Faridpur,* Calcutta, 1925, p. 36). This may be considered another reason for the riverine character of the *Farā'iḍī* movement.

The administrative changes wrought by the British in Bengal had affected the urban and rural Muslim populace somewhat differently. For, whereas the former were losing their hold on the government jobs, trade, commerce and facilities in other vocations, the latter were oppressed by the new class of Ḥindu *zamīndārs* and European indigo planters. Thus, the sufferings of the former accrued mainly from the political weakness of the Muslims, whereas the suffering of the latter was mainly due to the changes effected in the agrarian economy of Bengal. The *Farā'iḍī* movement, with its doctrines of equality and brotherhood as well as by its relentless struggle against the Hindu *zamīndārs* and European indigo planters, had little appeal in the urban centres such as Dacca, Comilla and Chittagong towns. But as these were the real problems in the interior of Eastern Bengal, specially in those areas where Hindu *zamīndārs* and European indigo planters were powerful, the *Farā'iḍī* movement answered the demands of the common men. Hence, it flourished mainly among the lower classes of rural Bengal and became most popular in those places where Hindu *zamīndārs* and European indigo planters were oppressive.

The progress of the *Farā'iḍī* movement followed a somewhat definite pattern. First of all, the leaders established a few propaganda centres in a local town or a village. Such centres were established by Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh at the river-port of Chandpur in Tippera district, Nayabari and Rekabi Bazar in Dacca district and at Kamalapur in the town of Faridpur. Usually, the local *Farā'iḍīs* built and maintained a rest-house, called *āstānā,* in each of these centres, for the comfort of the leaders as well as for those who came to meet them from the interior. The *Farā'iḍī* leaders would then keep on touring these places at short intervals, and make contact with the people of the outlying regions. On occasions of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh's visit to these *āstānās*, numerous people used to throng from far off places to see him, as his name as a theologian had spread far and wide.

The new converts usually turned out to be great enthusiasts, and not only carried the message of the Ḥājī to their brethren in the interior but also tried to imitate the " propaganda centre " by building an *āstānā* in their own village and electing an influential *Farā'iḍī* as their leader. Later on, specially at the time of Dudu Miyān, such local leaders were made *Gāon khalīfahs*[1]. Numerous examples of this category are observed in the district of Tippera. For instance, one 'Aẓīm al-Dīn Khundkār of Singardah (a village near Laksam) met Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh at Chandpur and became a convert. On return to his native village, he devoted most of his time to the propagation of the *Farā'iḍī* doctrines and in a few years so many converts were made that the necessity of appointing a local leader for the interior of Tippera was urgently felt. 'Aẓīm al-Dīn was, therefore, appointed *khalīfah* by Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh[2]. But the *Farā'iḍīs* increased in the interior of Tippera Sadar subdivision so rapidly that in Dudu Miyān's time five more *khalīfahs* and a Superintendent *khalīfah* over them were to be appointed[3].

During the time of Dudu Miyān, the *Farā'iḍī* propaganda was intensified. His spectacular success against the Hindu *zamīndārs*, his tactful dealings with the English officers, and his marvellous organizing capacity, captured the imagination of the masses ; and his extensive cross-country tours brought the hero in their close contact. None hesitated to join his party. As a result the flood of the *Farā'iḍī* movement swept over the whole of eastern Bengal. Even so, the *Farā'iḍīs* did not get as many disciples as they got supporters. This became evident specially after the death of Dudu Miyān, when the tide was turned by the preachings of Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī.

1 See *supra.*, Chapter viii,

2 Based on traditions current in the family of 'Aẓīm al-Dīn Khundkār, collected during a field-study of the present writer in 1958. The above account is also corroborated by tradition current in the family of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh. See Appendix "F".

3 See *infra.*, Appendix "F".

Undoubtedly, the *Farā'iḍi* preachers made the followers of the traditional society (whom they called *Riwājī*) realise, how blindly they were groping in darkness and following superstitious beliefs and practices in the name of Islām. But, along with their doctrines of purification, the *Farā'iḍīs* prohibited the congregational prayers of *Jum'ah* and *'Īd*, which the *Riwājīs* were unwilling to give up. The attraction and repulsion thus produced in the minds of the people, probably created a new conflict in the Muslim society of Bengal, which prepared the ground for the general acceptance of Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī's milder reforms. Thus, during the later half of the nineteenth century, when the protagonists of other religious movements, such as, *Ta'aiyuni*, *Tariqah-i Muḥammadiyah* and *Ahl-i-Ḥadīth*, who supported the prayers of *Jum'ah* and *'Īd*, also intensified their propaganda in Eastern Bengal, the number of the *Farā'iḍīs* steadily decreased except in the districts of Dacca, Tippera, Faridpur and Bakarganj, where the *Farā'iḍīs* had strong propaganda centres. Even in these districts the Muslims became sharply divided on the question of holding the prayers of *Jum'ah* and *'Īd*, and the *Farā'iḍīs* came to be known as the *Be-Jum'ah Wālā* (the antagonists of the *Jum'ah*) and the rest as *Jum'ah Wālā* (the protagonists of the *Jum'ah*). A good deal of family records and current tradition, collected by the present writer from various parts of the above-mentioned districts, indicate that from the time of Dudu Miyān's death in A. D. 1862 down to the present day there has been a general tendency among the people to fall away from the former group and join the latter; so that, at present the *Farā'iḍīs* are seen in appreciable number only in the Narayanganj and Munshiganj subdivisions of Dacca and in the Chandpur[1] and Sadar subdivisions of Tippera[2]. Thus, the sudden swelling of the *Farā'iḍi* movement during the time of Dudu Miyān, shows how the Muslim masses of Eastern Bengal were groping for leadership and how enthusiastically they hailed the emergence of a strong leader.

1 See *infra.*, Appendix "E".

2 See *infra.*, Appendix "F".

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 'A'

Castes of the Faridpur Muslims

The following manuscript document, signed by W.A. Wells, Collector of Faridpur, on the 19th of September, 1872, gives the census of different races and castes living in the district of Faridpur. The document has been preserved in the Collectorate Record Room of Faridpur and was copied by the present writer in 1957.

According to this document, the total number of inhabitant in Faridpur district in 1872 was 10,12,524 ; the Muslims being 5,88,522, Hindus 4,23,599, Christians 401, Assamese 1 and Malabar 1.

The Hindus are listed under 108 castes and sub-castes and the Muslims under 18 castes. The portion which deals with the Muslims is reproduced below :

Ref. No. 520, dated 19-9-72.

From W.A. Wells, Collector of Faridpur,

To the Commissioner, Dacca.

SUBJECT : *Castes of Fraidpur.*

Mahamadans (sec. 1)

No.	Caste	Members	Remark
1.	Beldar	313	Diggers and excavaters
2.	Dai	195	The women mid-wife

No.	Caste	Members	Remark
3.	Dhawa	20	Grocers (?)
4.	Jola [Jolaha]	6,036	Weavers
5.	Kahar	13	Bearers
6.	Karigars	142	Weavers same as Jola
7.	Kulu	379	Oil manufacturers
8.	Kunjea	4	Sell vegetables
9.	Moghal	2	Moghal up-countrymen settled here.
10.	Masalchi	50	Torch bearer
11.	Mollah	85	Priest
12.	Unspecified	574,740	
13.	Nagarchi	40	Play on the tom tom
14.	Nikari	260	Sell fish, cut up fish
15.	Panjari	10	Sell fish
16.	Pathan	229	
17.	Shaikh	5,534	
18.	Syed	480	
	Total . .	5,88,522	

APPENDIX 'B'

In *Muslim Ratnahār*, Wazīr 'Alī says that Mawlana Karāmat 'Alī collided with the *Farā'iḍīs* in B.S. 1245 [A.D. 1839], which falls in the last year of Ḥājī S͟harī'at Allāh's life. He says :[1]

> "In the year 1245 of the Hindustānī era [*i.e.*. B.S.],
> Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī came to Bengal [*i.e.*, Eastern Bengal] ;
>
> And ordered to hold the prayers of *Jum'ah* and *'Id.*
> Hence some people inclined to that ;
>
> And, thus the opinion of Karāmat 'Alī also spread,
> Whereas all followed Dudu Miyān before".

1 Wazīr 'Alī : *Muslim Ratnahār*, p. 9 .

"বারশ' পাঁচ চল্লিশ সালে হিন্দুস্থানী ।
মাওলানা ক্রামত আলী আসে বঙ্গে শুনি ।।
তিনি আসি জুমা ঈদ আদেশিয়া দিল ।
ভবিষ্যতে দু'একজন সেদিকে ঝুকিল ।।
এইমাত্র ক্রামত আলীর রায় হইল নাম ।
পূর্বেতে দুদু মিঞার রায় আছিল তামাম ।।"

APPENDIX 'C'

A Report of the Collector of Faridpur showiug the items of Taxes and cesses levied in the district in A.D. 1872[1].

From the Collector of Faridpur,

To the Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

SUBJECT : *Report on the Local Cesses and Taxes.*

Sir,

With reference to your (Circular) No. 16, dated 10th instant (May, 1872), I have the honour to report that there is no local Taxes or Cesses raised under Government orders in this district.

I attach for your perusal two lists, one containing the Taxes under the Law in force[2] and the other containing a list of Illegal Cesses which, I believe, are levied.

(Sd.) W.A. WELLS

2. *List of Illegal Cesses levied in the District of Faridpur.*

Names of Cesses		Description
1. Murucha	...	Fee on marriage.
2. Agomani Kharcha	...	Fee on the arrival of the Zamindar on his estate [*i.e.* at the local Cutchery].
3. Bebaha [Bibāha] Kharcha	...	Fee levied when any marriage takes place in the Zamindar's family.

1 Recovered by the present writer from the Record Room of the Faridpur Collectorate in 1958 with the permission of the District Magistrate of Faridpur. See Letter Issued, No. 169, dated the 16th May, 1872, File : Year 1872-73, Faridpur Collectorate Records.

2 List No. 1, of Legal Taxes was missing from the File.

Name of Cesses		Description
4. Srudh Kharcha	...	Fee levied on the death of father, mother, or some other elderly member of the Zamindar's family.
5. Paita Kharch	...	Levied when the Zemindar's son takes sacred thread.
6. Bhura Kharcha	...	Levied when the arms of the Zemindar's son are pierced. (It is also called Godani Kharcha).
7. Terpan	...	Levied since the cyclone of A.D. 1864.
8. Mukaddama Kharcha	...	Levied to meet the expenses of [the Zemindar's] Mukaddama [litigation] at Court.
9. Jarimana or fines	...	Levied on the occurrence of dispute between ryots.
10. Rusum for Darkhast	...	Levied on every petition filled by the ryot to his Zemindar.
11. Bain Selami	...	Levied on the preparation of Gur or Molasses (from date tree?).
12. Selami	...	Levied on the preparation of Gur or Molasses (from sugar-cane?).
13. Ruth Kharcha	...	Levied on Zemindar's Ratha Yatra celebration.
14. Batta	...	Levied for alleged deficit on coins paid by ryots as rents.
15. Peyadah Kharcha	...	Peon's fee for collecting rents, etc.
16. Tohuree	...	Consideration Cess paid to Zemindar's Amlah [*i.e.*, clerk] for receiving rent.

	Name of Cesses	Description
17.	Bhet	... Presents (to the Zamindar) on the occurrence of Srudh in the ryot's family.
18.	Matshu Jugar	... Supply of fish by fishermen free of cost.
19.	Peura Kharcha	... (Illegible).
20.	Guzee Kharcha	... Contribution on account of Zemindar's winter clothing.
21.	Malikan Suranjami Kharcha	... Levied to re-imburse the expenses on account of the salary of Amlah [clerk].
22.	Chhata or Chhatra Kharcha	... Levied to defray the expenses of Zemindar's umbrella bearer.
23.	Imam Kharcha	... Levied for the Muharram, to which the Hindu as well as the Muslim Zemindar's subscribed.

(Sd.) W.A. WELLS

APPENDIX 'D'

A Report of the Collector of Faridpur relating to the rate of Land Revenues levied in A.D. 1872[1]

From W.A. Wells, Collector of Faridpur,

To the Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

Sir,

With reference to your Circular No. 33, dated the 4th ultimo, I beg to forward two statements, one for the subdivision of Gualunda and the other for the Saddur subdivision.

2. The rates have been carefully ascertained by enquiries made through the Police. Many respectable people of the different parts of the district who are expected to possess thorough and intimate knowledge on the subject have also been consulted.

3. The measures vary in different Parganahs but nobody could give any satisfactory explanation of the cause of this variation. Different rates are also paid in different Parganah's situated within the jurisdiction of the same Police Station for the same kind of land for the same crops, but the difference is not so great as to call for explanation.

It is supposed that the levy of the rates depended originally, as it does at the present day, on the power and influence which the Zemindar possessed. It is generally found throughout the district that two plots of land situated side by side and similar in every respect pay different rates, and this is because the proprietor of those (lands) is more powerful and exacting than that of the other. In short, where the Zemindar is powerful he can and does in many instances enhance the rates, while the neighbouring Zemindar if he happen to be weak and poor must content himself with low rates.

(Sd.) W.A. WELLS

1 Recovered by the present writer from the Record Room of the Faridpur Collectorate in 1958 with the permission of the District Magistrate of Faridpur. See Letter issued, No. 424, dated the 12th September, 1872, File; Year 1872-73, Faridpur Collectorate Records.

APPENDIX 'E'

Farā'iḍī Settlement of Chandpur : A field-study (A.D. 1958)

The river-port of Chandpur played very important role in the spread of the *Farā'iḍī* movement. Chandpur was frequently visited by Ḥājī Sharīat Allāh and his son Dudu Miyān. It has always been a formidable *Farā'iḍī* stronghold, and the *Farā'iḍīs* retained considerable strength throughout this subdivision in the social as well as religious spheres down to the present day. This is clearly borne out in the village administration of the subdivision, where out of about 53 Presidents of the Union Boards about 35 are claimed to be *Farā'iḍīs*[1].

According to the *Farā'iḍīs*, Chandpur proper is the land between Char Lakshmi to Shaitnol (about 30 miles from south to north) and from Meghna to Shakdi (about 8 miles from west to east), which is divided by the *Farā'ḍīs* (from the time of Dudu Miyān) into one hundred units, each unit being put under the control of a *khalīfah.* About twenty-two to twenty-eight *khalīfahs* of the units (whose official title is Block *khalīfah*) are again brought under the supervision of a Superintendent *khalīfah.* Thus, at present, there are four Superintendent *khalīfahs* and about 100 Block *khalīfahs* in Chandpur. Muḥammad Ḥabīb Allāh, who is the Superintendent *khalīfah* of the Chandpur town and its surroundings, has only 10 Block *khalīfahs* under him. This reduction in the number of Block *khalīfahs* under him and consequently, reduction in area, is due to the inclusion of the town and its knotty problems under his supervision[2], Mawlawī Hārūn al-Rashīd, who is a Block *khalīfah*, has 360 houses to look after[3].

The first *Farā'iḍī* *khalīfah* of Chandpur was Munīr al-Dīn Khalīfah. He came to Chandpur in his boyhood from Hatiya to

1 Statement of Ḥājī 'Abd al-Qādir Bhuiyan, President, Union Board (Chandpur Town Area), who himself is a *Farā'iḍī* (1958).

2 Statement of Muḥammad Ḥabīb Allāh.

3 Statement of Mawlawī Hārūn al-Rashīd.

study Arabic and Persian. Later on, he married a local girl and settled permanently at Chandpur. When grown up, he met Ḥājī Shariat Allāh several times in course of latter's visit to Chandpur, and became an ardent disciple of the Ḥājī. He was a very pious man, and shortly before the Ḥājī's death, he was made a *khalīfah*[1]. He died in Agrahāyan, B.S. 1282[2].

His *khilāfat* was inherited by Ḥamīd Allāh, his son-in-law, who died in B.S. 1322 at the age of about 76 years. His son 'Abd al-Qādir is the present President of the Chandpur Union Board. The *khilāfat* has been bestowed on 'Abd al-Qādir's son-in-law, Muḥammad Ḥabīb Allāh.

The second important *Farā'iḍī khalifah* of the olden days, was Pahlawān Ghāzī Munshī. He built a *Masjid* and a *Madrasah*, and made an endowment of about 15 *bighās* of land for their maintenance. The *Madrasah*, is named after Dudu Miyān[3] "Muḥsiniyah Madrasah", and is still running in good condition. The Ghāzī was a *khalīfah* of Dudu Miyān. He died about A.D. 1925, when he was 120 years old.

Pahlawān Ghāzī was a Superintendent *khalifah* and was assigned 28 villages. His *khilāfat* was inherited by his grandson Rafī' Muḥammad Pātwāri. Rafī's son Mawlawī Samīr al-Dīn Aḥmad was appointed *khalīfah* after his father's death. The present *khalīfah* of the area is his son Muḥammad Sa'īd al-Dīn *Khalīfah*[4].

Another Superintendent *khalīfah* of a later time was Shāh Muḥammad Wāḥid Bakhsh, who died in 1940, when he was about 60 years old. He had 25 villages under him in the Parganah of Amirabad. He was a *khalīfah* of Khān Bahādur Sa'īd al-Dīn[5],

1 Statement of Ḥājī 'Abd al-Qādir.

2 Tomb inscription of Munīr al-Dīn in the Nutan Bazar 4/12 ward of Chandpur Town. The name is inscribed as "Pīr Muniruddin Khalīfāh" in Bengali script.

3 Dudu Miyān's name was Muḥsin al-Dīn Aḥmad.

4 Statement of Muḥammad Sa'īd al-Dīn Khalīfah.

5 The youngest son of Dudu Miyān and later *Ustād* of the *Farā'iḍī* movement.

and was a *Talukdār*. He estabished a High *Madrasah* at Saharmali, and had great hold on the people[1].

During the lifetime of Ḥājī S̲h̲arī'at Allāh there were only a few thousand *Farā'iḍīs* in Chandpur. But when Dudu Miyān came to the helm of affairs, the number increased with extraordinary rapidity, and in a short time the entire population of the subdivision became staunch adherents of the great leader.

During the time of Munīr al-Dīn K̲h̲alīfah and Pahlawān G̲h̲āzī, there was no law court at Chandpur town. The nearest law court was located at Narsingpur. The *k̲h̲alīfahs* then played very important role in maintaining order and justice in the society.

The *Farā'iḍīs* were organised in small *Samāj*, consisting of about 40 families or more. Each *Samāj* had five *Māṭbars* (*Elders*), with whose help, the *k̲h̲alīfah* administered justice to the people. If a person was not satisfied with the judgement of the *k̲h̲alīfah*, he was at liberty to make an appeal to the head of the *Farā'iḍī* movement at Faridpur. But if he took resort to the court of the British Government his case was invariably lost. Because, in the first place, none would like to offend the powerful *k̲h̲alīfah* by standing witness for him ; and secondly he was sure to be ostracised in the society. Besides, it was difficult to enforce the judgement of the court in the remote villages against the organised *Farā'iḍīs*.

The forms of punishment which were imposed by the *k̲h̲alīfah* were whipping, blows of shoes and ostracision, which are practised by the Block *k̲h̲alīfahs* and the Superintendent *k̲h̲alīfahs* down to the present time.

Pīr Bād*s̲h̲*āh Miyān, the present head of the *Farā'iḍīs*, has a great hold on the people of Chandpur. His piousness, simplicity and moral courage are admired by the *Farā'iḍīs* and *non-Farā'iḍīs* alike. He is said to have cleared Chandpur town of a few hundred prostitutes.

1 Statement of S̲h̲āh Muḥammad Ḥasan relative of the deceased S̲h̲āh Muḥammad Wāḥid Bak̲h̲s̲h̲.

At the present time, the *Farā'iḍī khalīfah* exercises considerable control in the social and religious sphere of the society. He is required to give sanction to matrimony and receives a fee of two rupees on every marriage taking place in his area. He arbitrates disputes relating to landed property, inheritance, marriage and divorse ; he punishes those who indulge in anti-social and irreligious activities, and his advice and assistance are eagerly sought in times of distress.

In 1947 there was an attempt at Chandpur to revive the old *Farā'iḍī* system of administration. An association was formed, which was called "Chandpur Sharī'atiyā Momen Committee", 24 branches of which were opened in the villages and each branch, with a five-men committee, was entrusted to administer *sharī'ah* to the people[1].

The association functioned vigorously for about one year, but since 1949 sank gradually into non-existence.

Shortly after independence, Pīr Bādshāh Miyān visited Chandpur and permitted the people to pray *Jum'ah* in the town. A meeting was called by the Sharī'atiyā Momen Committee on the 5th November, 1947, to fix the date for the first *Jum'ah*. Since then the *Farā'iḍīs* pray *Jum'ah* and *'Īd* in the town. But these prayers are not permitted in the villages. Still, some of the *Farā'iḍīs* mix with other Muslims and pray *Jum'ah* with them in the villages as well.

1 A number of documents relating to the Sharī'atiyā Momen Committee have been collected by the present writer.

APPENDIX 'F'

Farā'iḍī Settlements in the interior of the district of Tippera : A field-study

(A. D. 1958)

In the spread of the *Farā'iḍī* movement, the propaganda centres of Bahadurpur (in the district of Faridpur), Rekabi Bazar (in the district of Dacca) and the river-port of Chandpur (in the district of Tippera), played an important role. In fact, these three centres formed as if the tips of a triangle from which the *Farā'iḍī* influence flowed into the interior regions.

Chandpur had become a *Farā'iḍī* stronghold during the life time of Ḥāji Sharī'at Allāh and his frequent visit to this port-town created a sensation among the credulous masses of the interior of Tippera. Inspired by religious motive or just curious to see him, many people came to Chandpur from far off villages at the time of his visit.

Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh's call for repentence (*tawbah*) his appeal to them to join him in strengthening Islām, enkindled new hopes and roused noble sentiments in their hearts. As a result, they returned home as inspired *Farā'iḍīs* or at least supporters of the reform movement. As Ḥāji Sharī'at Allāh never visited the interior of Tippera, this was in general the pattern of contact between him and the mass of the people.

Evidences gathered from the district of Tippera and Noakhali indicate that the *Farā'iḍī* movement met with no effective opposition in the interior of these districts during the life time of the Ḥājī (*i.e.* till A.D. 1840). For, Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī, the leader of the *Ta'aiyuni* movement and Mawlawī Imām al-Din (who preached the reform doctrines of Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd in the district of Noakhali), began to exert their influence about A.D. 1850 onwards, who on account of their zeal for defending the congregational prayers of *Jum'ah* and *'Īd* curved the progress of the *Farā'iḍī* movement. Hence, the fact that the *Farā'iḍī* movement

did not become universal in the interior of Noakhali and Tippera before this time, may have been due to the lack of proper exertion on the part of the *Farā'idī* leaders.

During the eighteen-thirties the number of *Farā'iḍīs* had, however, increased considerably in these two districts, specially in the Sadar subdivision of Tippera ; so that in the latter place, the need for appointing a *khalīfah* was deeply felt. Thus, 'Aẓīm al-Dīn Khundkār of Singardah was appointed *khalīfah* by Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh, and was given the charge of administering religious law (*sharī'ah*) to the *Farā'iḍīs* and settling their disputes by arbitration. 'Aẓīm al-Dīn died about A.D. 1842 and the *khilāfat* remained heriditory in his family down to the present day.

In eighteen-forties the *Farā'iḍī* propaganda was intensified by Dudu Miyān and his colleagues. Dudu Miyān's spectacular success against the Hindu *zamīndārs*, his tactful dealings with Englitsh officers and his uncommon organising capacity captured the imagination of the masses. On the other hand, his cross-country tours in the interior of Tippera brought them in contact with his attractive personality. As a result, the flood of the *Farā'iḍī* movement swept over Tippera district.

If we are to accept the witness of the present generation, the Brahman Baria subdivision appears to have been a compact colony of Dudu Miyān's supporters. But at present the number of *Farā'iḍīs* there is negligible. In the interior of two other subdivisions, *i.e.*, the Saddar subdivision and Chandpur subdivision, Dudu Miyān was able to gain a large following, and a considerable number of villages continue to be compact *Farā'iḍī* settlements down to the present day.

The remnants of the *Farā'iḍī* settlements in the interior of the Sadar subdivision indicate that the penetration of the *Farā'iḍī* influence flowed from Chanpur and Dawud Kandi. A narrow strip of villages stretching from Chandpur to Kachua and thence to Dawud Kandi is still dominated by the *Farā'iḍīs.*

During the life time of Dudu Miyān (d. 1862) the number of *khalīfahs* in this area was increased to five including the successors of 'Aẓīm al-Dīn Khundkār[1]. Again, one of them, Darwesh 'Alī Munshī was made Superintendent *khalīfah* of Kachua, Chandina and Dawud Kandi which formed a circle or *gird*. In this circle he had his own *khalīfahs*[2], with whose assistance he was commissioned to administer the *sharī'ah* or religious justice to the *Farā'iḍīs*. Also, he was empowered by Dudu Miyān to make his own disciples.

The rail-road from Chandpur to Laksham has disturbed the *Farā'iḍī* settlements which formed a continuous line there. But from Singardah to Dawud Kandi a *Farā'iḍī* belt exists down to to the present day[3]. There are other *Farā'iḍī* settlements in the rest of the two subdivisions and individual *Farā'iḍīs* here and there, but they are sporadic and scattered.

1 The following were the *khalīfahs* of Dudu Miyān :-
(1) 'Aṭā' Allāh Munshī of Singardah, (2) Maṭī' Allāh Munshī of Singardah, (3) Bakhshī Miyānjī of Baichhara Nayapara, (4) Faiḍ al-Dīn Munshī of Purba Baichhara, and (5) Darwesh 'Alī Munshī of Bajarikhula.

2 The following persons were the *Khalīfahs* of Darwesh 'Alī Munshī :-
(1) Anis Miyānjī of Satbaria, (2) Akhtar Allāh Munshī of Kalagaon, (3) Yānus Munshī of Batakashi, (4) 'Aṭā' al-Dīn Akhand of Kalasuna, and (5) Safar al-Dīn Miyānjī of Atomur. Even today the descendants of these *khalīfahs* pay allegiance to the descendants of Darwesh 'Alī.

3 This *Farā'iḍī* belt includes the following villages :—
Kumarkasha, Andhirpar, Nahara, Singardah, Noagaon, Baichhara, Ainpur, Sankarpur, Krishnapur, Ragdoil, Jaynagar, Kalasuna, Maligaon and Mahmudpur.

APPENDIX 'G'

A Few Prominent Farā'iḍī Leaders

1. *Jalāl al-Dīn Mullāh of Faridpur* :

Jalāl al-Dīn was a resident of Kamalapur in the modern Faridpur town. According to his family tradition[1], one of his uncles met Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh at Makkah. When the Ḥājī returned to Bengal and started his reform movement Jalāl al-Dīn's uncle supported him. Through his influence, Jalāl al-Dīn was converted to *Farā'iḍī* doctrines at a young age.

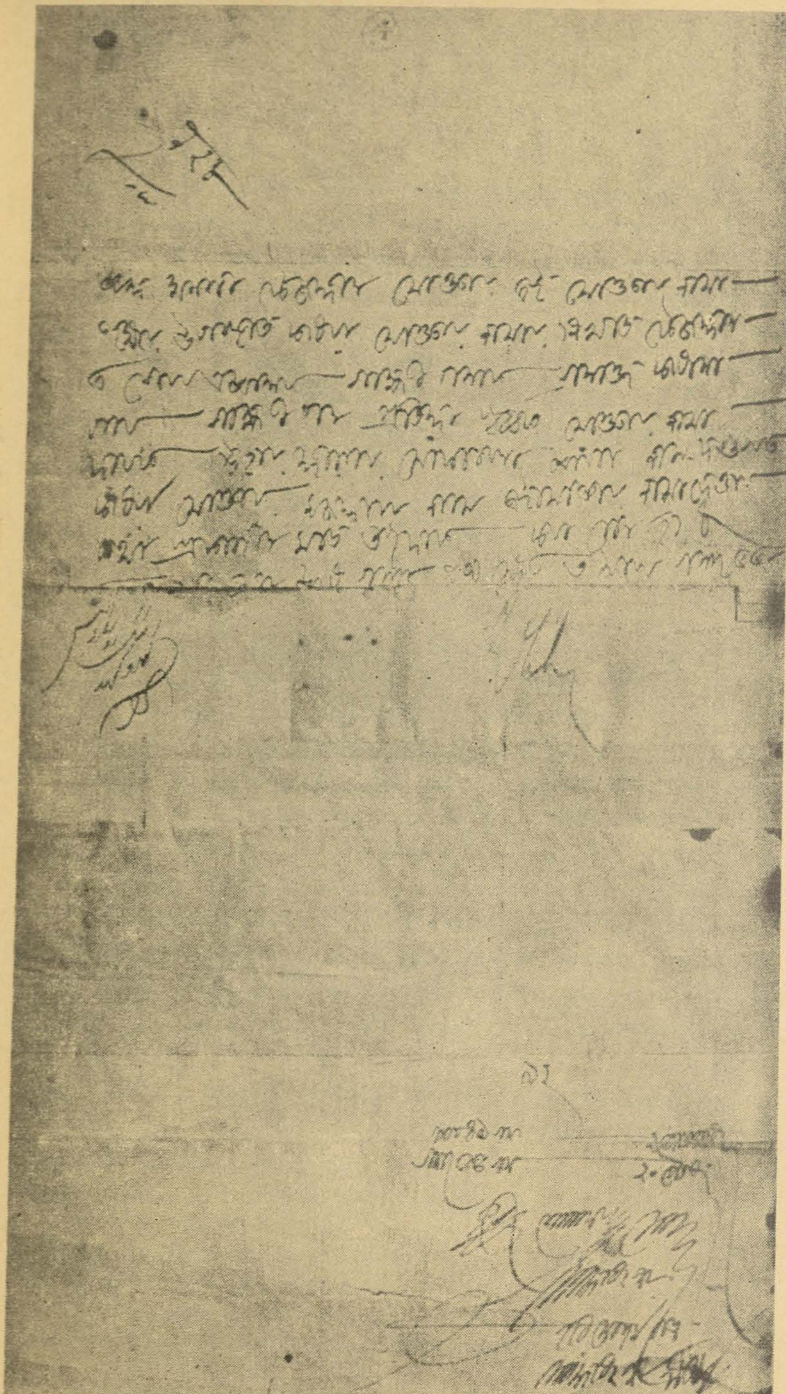
Jalāl al-Dīn belonged to a "Mandal" family. After becoming a *Farā'iḍī*, he read the *Qur'ān* and learnt a little bit of Arabic and Urdu. Thereupon Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh changed his family title to "Mullāh".

In the eighteen thirties, he rose to an influential position in the society of his locality, not only as an elder but also as a good wrestler. For, in those days, affray fighting over disputed lands was a common occurrence and Jalāl al-Dīn Mullāh could play wonderfully with sticks.

In this period, the antagonism between the Hindu *zamīndārs* and *Farā'iḍī* peasantry created a tense situation. Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh felt the need of raising a band of affray fighters to defend his followers from the oppression of the *zamīndārs* and commissioned Jalāh al-Dīn Mullāh to organise a corps of affray fighters and to train them in clubmanship. When Dudu Miyān returned from Makkah about A.D. 1836, he joind hands with Jalāl al-Dīn Mullāh in training and supervising affray parties.

During Dudu Miyān's time, Jalal al-Dīn played an important role in the *siyāsī* or political branch of the *Farā'iḍī* organisation. He died sometimes after 1850.

1 Supplied to the present writer by Mawlawī Rafī' al-Din Aḥmad of Kamalapur, great grandson of Jalāl al-Dīn Mullāh in 1958.



Part of a Document of Dudu Miyān giving power of legal attorney to Munshī Faiḍ al-Dīn Mukhtār. (See *J. A. S. P.*, Vol. vi, 1961, pp. 124-131.)

2. *Munshī Faiḍ al-Dīn Mukhtār* :

Faiḍ al-Dīn Mukhtār son of Agar Muḥammad Sutkār, was originally a resident of Jessore[1], who emigrated to Faridpur about A.D. 1840. According to tradition current in his family at Faridpur[2], he was sent to Calcutta to study Arabic and Persian at an early age. He was strong and stout, and soon developed a taste for wrestling. At that time Titu Mīr was a professional wrestler at Calcutta, and young Faiḍ al-Dīn joined his party. Later on when Titu Mīr (after being a disciple of Sayyid Aḥmad Shahīd), returned to Calcutta (*circa.* A.D. 1827), Faiḍ al-Dīn had the opportunity of meeting him there. Thereafter, Faiḍ al-Dīn became a staunch supporter of Titu Mīr, and on his return to Jessore, his native district, he began to preach the puritan doctrines advocated by Titu.

Not far from his native village Panipara, there was an indigo factory at Mirganj, on the bank of Barasia river. The oppression of the indigo planters on the Muslim cultivators soon attracted his attention. He preached the new reform doctrines to the peasantry and organised them into a solid party. About A.D. 1840, the conflict between the cultivators and the European planters had come to grips, and in one of the skirmishes Faiḍ al-Dīn was wounded. Thereafter, he did not feel secure to live within the reach of the Mirganj indigo planter, and emigrated to Faridpur. There he married the daughter of Jalāl al-Dīn Mullāh, an eminent *Farā'idī* leader, and settled there permanently. He, however, did not become a *Farā'idī* himself but remained a follower of Titu Mīr till his death[3].

At Faridpur, he took up legal profession or Mukhtārship at the district court. In A.D. 1849, he was appointed legal attorney

1 *Cf.*, MS. *Document*, giving power of legal attorney by Dudu Miyān to Faiḍ al-Dīn Mukhtār, dated A.D. 1849, recovered by the present writer (see *J.A.S.P.*, Vol. vi, 1961, pp. 124-31).

2 Supplied to the present writer by Mawlawī Rafī' al-Dīn Aḥmad, grandson of Faiḍ al-Dīn Mukhtar of Faridpur.

3 Information supplied to the present writer by Mawlawī Rafī' al-Dīn Aḥmad, grandson of Faiḍ al-Dīn Mukhtār of Faridpur.

by Dudu Miyān to look after his landed property and to represent him in the court and other government offices[1]. In A.D. 1862, on the death of Dudu Miyān, he was appointed one of the guardians of Dudu Miyān's sons. He died sometimes later.

3. *Mawlawī Kafīl al-Dīn Aḥmad*[2] :

Kafīl al-Dīn Aḥmad, the eldest son of Munshī Faiḍ al-Dīn Mukhtār, was born in A.D. 1856. He was a colleague of Khān Bahādur Sa'īd al-Dīn Aḥmad and went to school together with him at Bahadurpur and Dacca. At Dacca, he studied under Mawlānā Dīn Muḥammad. Later on he got admitted at the Muḥsiniyah Madrasah of Dacca and became a student of Mawlānā 'Ubayd Allāh 'Ubaydī.

On his return to Faridpur about A.D. 1885, he was appointed a *khalīfah* by Khān Bahādur Sa'īd al-Dīn. Subsequently he was made a Superintendent *khalīfah*. Towards the close of the 19th century he was promoted to the position of *Uparastha khalīfah*, and a *sanad* was granted to him, assigning him the charge of maintenance of social and religious justice among the *Farā'iḍīs* of Rajbāri, Bhanga, Maqsudpur, Bhushna, Faridpur, Sadarpur, Nagarkanda and of the surrounding territories. In other words, he was given the charge of Faridpur Sadar subdivision and parts of Goalunda subdivision.

Under Mawlawī Kafīl al-Dīn there were Superintendent *khalīfahs*. The most prominent among them were (1) Kazem Mullah[3] of Gird-i-Jahānpūr and (2) Munshī Ghiyāth al-Dīn Shāh Faqir[4] of Gird-i-Tālmā.

1 MS. *Document*, *op. cit*.

2 The following account is based on the family tradition of Mawlawī Kafīl al-Dīn Aḥmad collected by the present writer during a tour in 1958, from his son Mawlawī Rafī' al-Dīn Aḥmad of Kamalapur in the town of Faridpur.

3 Formerly Kazem Mullāh belonged to a *Julaha* (weaver) caste. On his acceptance of the *Farā'iḍī* doctrines, his title of "Julaha" was changed to "Kārīgar" Later on, as he learnt to read the *Qur'ān* and to understand its simple meaning he was given the title of Mullāh.

4 Ghiyāth al-Dīn was living in 1958, whose age was claimed to be 120 years.

In the *Farā'idī* organisation the administration of justice occupied a prominent place. The *Farā'idīs* were not allowed to file a suit in the law courts without the permission of the Superintendent *khalīfah*. Such permission was given only in complicated criminal cases. All other disputes were settled by the *khalīfahs*. As a *Uparastha khalīfah*, Mawlawī Kafīl al-Dīn was required to go around his area frequently for settling disputes and administering justice and to give spiritual training to numerous *Farā'idīs* who were initiated into the *Qādiriyah ṣūfī* order. Besides, he was a good orator, and preached in large and small gatherings arranged by the *Farā'idīs* at different places. Sometimes religious conferences were held by the *Farā'idīs* at Faridpur, Madaripur, Barisal, Dacca, Chandpur and Rekabi Bazar, in which he took a prominent part.

From the middle of the 19th century Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī of Jawnpur and his followers vehemently challenged the *Farā'idī* point of view on the question of holding congregational prayers of *Jum'ah* and *'Īd.* Public debate between them and the *Farā'idīs* had become a familiar scene in Bengal. Mawlawī Kafīl al-Dīn was frequently called for defending the *Farā'idī* tenets in such debates. When Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī's son Mawlawī 'Abd al-Awwal visited Eastern Bengal[1], Kafīl al-Din had a number of debates with him.

At the time of the partition of Bengal in 1905, Mawlawī Kafil al- Dīn and Khān Bahādur Sa'īd al-Dīn supported the move and

1 Mawlānā 'Abd al-Awwal is known to have paid several visits to Eastern Bengal (*cf.* Abu 'l-Bashar and 'Abd al-Bātin : *Sīrat-i-Mawlānā 'Abd al-Awwal Jawnpūrī.* Jawnpur, 1370 A.H. pp. 52, 53, 99, 127, 134, 153 and 185 f.) But, no mention of the debates between him and Mawlawī Kafīl al-Dīn has been made in his biography. The Mawlānā had, however, written and published a tract in Urdu, entitled *Idhān al-Warā' bi-Ṣiḥat al-Jum'ah fī 'l-Mudun wa 'l-Qurā* (*i.e.*, Permission of the pious theologians on the lawfulness of holding the prayer of *Jum'ah* in the towns and villages), which was precisely the subject of controversy between them (*cf. ibid.*, p. 189). Thus, it appears that such debate between them may have actuallay taken place.

joined their hands with Nawab Sir Salīm Allāh of Dacca. They stood against the propaganda drive of Srī Ambikā Charan Majumdār of Faridpur, the one time president of All-India National Congress. As the Hindus boycotted the English goods, he opened a store of Liverpool salt at Faridpur.

During the non-co-operation movement of 1921-1922, he sided with the *khilafatis* and was jailed along with Bādshāh Miyān. From that time the *Farā'iḍis* changed their previous policy towards the British Government of India from friendship[1] to antagonism.

From the time of *khilāfat* movement, the learned doctors of Deoband school were exerting great influence in the interior of Bengal. The need of the unity of the Muslims was looming large in the imagination of everyone, and the importance of the petty theological controversies such as the problem of holding the prayer of *Jum'ah*, had receded to the oblivion. As the congregational prayers of *Jum'ah* and *'Īd* were instrumental to unity, many of the *Farā'iḍis*, especially the younger generation, felt strongly inclined in favour of holding these prayers. In accordance with the *Farā'iḍi* tenets Mawlawī Kafīl al-Dīn was of the opinion that congregational prayers could not be lawfully held in the villages. But when he visited the matropolis of Calcutta in 1927, he had participated in the prayer of *Jum'ah* at the *Jāmi' Masjid* and saw nothing wrong in holding the congregational prayers in such towns and cities which were the seats of government authorities. On the insistence of his son Mawlawī Rafi' al-Dīn Aḥmad to re-examine the *Farā'iḍī* views on holding congregational prayers, he sent Rafī' al-Dīn, in 1934, to Mawlānā 'Abd al-Raūf Dānāpūrī and Mawlānā Zafar Aḥmad 'Usmānī to consult their opinion on the matter. As they gave their opinion with appropriate evidence from the *Qur'ān* and the *Sunnah*, in favour of holding congregational prayers in the villages and towns of Bengal, Mawlawī Kafīl al-Dīn granted permission to his followers to hold the prayers of

1 See *supra.*, Chapter v.

Jum'ah and *'Id* at Faridpur. But unfortunately Kafīl al-Dīn was attacked by paralysis at that time and could not participate in the first *Jum'ah* prayer held by the *Farā'iḍīs* of his locality in 1935. Mawlawī Kafīl al-Dīn died about A.D. 1938.

4. *Sayyid 'Azīm al-Dīn Khundkār of Tippera and his successors*[1] :

Sayyid 'Aẓīm al-Khundkār (d. *circa*. 1842) came in contact with Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh at the river port of Chandpur during one of the visits of the Ḥājī to that place. Whenever the Ḥājī came to Chandpur, people of the interior of Tippera district used to come there in groups to meet him. 'Aẓīm al-Dīn came to see the Ḥājī from far off Singardah, his native village, about A.D. 1830, and was greatly impressed by his admonition. He returned home as a sincere disciple of the *Ḥājī* and an ardent supporter of the *Farā'iḍī* movement.

Towards the end of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh's life, when he decided to appoint *khalīfahs* at different places, 'Aẓīm al-Dīn was made a *khalīfah* for the interior of Tippera. He died about A.D. 1842. After his death, the *khilāfat* was inherited by his nephews, 'Aṭā' Allāh Munshī (d. *circa*., A.D. 1858), and Maṭī' Allāh Munshī (d. *circa*., A.D. 1860) ; and their descendants claim to be *Farā'iḍī khalīfahs* down to the present day[2].

Faiḍ al-Dīn Munshī was a man of some learning[3]. He took prominent part in the village politics, and preached *Farā'iḍī* doctrines in the interior of Tippera district. At home, he opened a *Maktab* where he gave lessons to the children in *Qur'ān* reading and Urdu and elementary Persian, and attracted students from

1 This is based on geneological evidence and tradition current in the family circles of Sayyid 'Azīm al-Din Khundkār of Singardah, Bakhshī Miyānj of Baichhara, Faiḍ al-Dīn Munshī of Purva Baisara and Darwesh 'Alī Munshī of Bajarikhula, having been corrected and modified by other data collected during cross-country tour of East Pakistan by the present writer in 1957 and 1958.

2 For instance, Faiḍ al-Dīn Khundkār of Singardah, a grandson of 'Aṭā' Allāh Munshī claims to be a *Farā'iḍī khalīfah*.

3 See footnote 2 above.

distant villages. One of his favourite students was Darwesh 'Alī Mun<u>sh</u>ī, who, later on, rose to the position of Superintendent *<u>kh</u>alīfah*.

5. Darwesh 'Alī Mun<u>sh</u>ī of Bajarikhula :

Darwesh 'Alī Mun<u>sh</u>ī of Bajarikhula became a disciple of Dudu Miyān about A.D. 1843. Dudu Miyān intensified his efforts to win over the masses of Eastern Bengal to his side. In the interior of the Chandpur subdivison (of Tippera district) alone, he appointed five *<u>kh</u>alīfahs*[1] including Darwesh 'Alī. Through their untiring efforts the Muslims of a narrow strip of villages from Singardah (near Laksam) to Dawud Kandi river-port (of Sadar subdivision) were converted wholesale to *Farā'iḍī* doctrines.

This spectacular success of the *Farā'iḍī* movement in the interior of Tippera is said to have been manipulated by Darwesh 'Alī Mun<u>sh</u>ī for which Dudu Miyān rewarded him by raising him to the position of a Superintendent *<u>kh</u>alīfah.* About A.D. 1850, Dudu Miyān paid a visit to the interior of Tippera from the river-port of Chandpur. He went straight to the residence of Darwesh 'Alī Mun<u>sh</u>ī at Bajarikhula, and taking him along proceeded to Singardah and then made a detour of the *Farā'iḍī* settlements. He appointed five more *<u>kh</u>alīfahs* at different areas and subordinated them to Darwesh 'Alī[2]. It is said that Dudu Miyān formed a *Farā'iḍī gird* in this part of Tippera which consisted of the present thanas of Kachua, Chandina and Dawud Kandi,

1 The *<u>kh</u>alīfahs* of Dudu Miyān were the following :—
(i) 'Aṭā' Allāh Mun<u>sh</u>ī of Singardah, (ii) Maṭī' Allāh Mun<u>sh</u>ī of Singardah, (iii) Ba<u>kh</u><u>sh</u>ī Miyānjī of Baichhara, (iv) Faiḍ al-Dīn Mun<u>sh</u>ī of Purba Baichhara, and (v) Darwesh 'Alī Mun<u>sh</u>ī of Bajarikhula.

2 The *<u>kh</u>alīfahs* who were subordinated to Darwesh 'Alī Mun<u>sh</u>ī :—
(i) Anis Miyānjī of Satbaria, (ii) A<u>kh</u>tar Allāh Mun<u>sh</u>ī of Kalagaon, (iii) Yānus Mun<u>sh</u>ī of Batakashi, (iv) 'Aṭā' al-Dīn A<u>kh</u>and of Kalasuna, and (v) Safar al-Dīn Miyānjī of Atomur.
It is interesting to note that the successors of these *<u>kh</u>alīfahs* do pay their allegiance to the successors of Darwesh 'Alī Mun<u>sh</u>ī down to the present day.

and Darwesh 'Alī was commissioned to administer Islāmic law and social justice to the *Farā'idīs* of this *gird*.

After the death of Darwesh 'Alī, his son 'Abd al-Raḥmān Munshī became the Superintendent *khalīfah*. He died in B.S. 1322 (A.D. 1915), and was succeeded by his son 'Irfān al-Dīn Munshī whose Superintendentship was formally renewed by the last Head of the *Farā'idīs*, *Bādshāh Miyān*[1].

1 The *Sanad* of *khilāfat* of 'Irfān al-Dīn Munshī was personally examined by the present writer during a tour of Bajarikhula in 1958, and its genuineness was confirmed by Bādshāh Miyān.

APPENDIX 'H'

Farā'iḍī 'Ulamā' of the nineteenth century

Among the *Farā'iḍi* theologians of the nineteenth century, Mawlawī 'Abd al-Jabbār, Mawlawī Thana Allāh and Mawlawī 'Abd al-Ḥayy were very prominent. But despite our strenuous attempts, very little of their biographical data could be recovered.

Mawlawī 'Abd al-Jabbār was a resident of Madaripur sub-division of the Faridpur district and a disciple of Ḥājī Sharī'at Allāh. He was a colleague of Dudu Miyān. He came to the prominence about A. D. 1867 when a debate was held between him and Mawlānā Karāmat 'Alī. Subsequently, as we have seen in Chapters i, iv and vii, he dominated the intellectual life of the *Farā'iḍīs.* He appears to have died about A. D. 1903.

Mawlawī Thanā Allāh was a resident of Faridpur district. He is claimed to have been educated in Hindustan, *i. e.*, at Lucknow or Delhi. The *Farā'iḍīs* refer to him generally with the laudable title " Rā'as al-Muḥaddithīn ", *i. e.*, the crown of the doctors of Prophetic tradition. According to the *Farā'iḍī* sources, he took prominent part in the debate of Dawud Kandi held between the *Farā'iḍīs* and the followers of local customs in A. D. 1903. He appears to have died soon after.

Mawlawī 'Abd al-Ḥayy was a resident of Madaripur subdivision and served as a teacher of theology in the *Farā'iḍī Madrasah* of Bahadurpur during the time of Khān Bahādur Sa'īd al-Dīn Aḥmad.

APPENDIX 'I'

The Farā'iḍī 'Ulamā' Conference of 1947

After independence in 1947, the *Farā'iḍīs* felt the need of re-examining their principle with regard to the congregational prayers. An *'ulamā'* conference was, therefore, held by the *Farā'iḍī* leaders in October, 1947, at Rekabi Bazar. A hand-bill, entitled " Jumā Samvandhe Mimānsā ",[1] which is available to us, shows that the conference was convened by Abā Khālid Rashīd al-Dīn Aḥmad *alias* Bādshāh Miyān, the then head of the *Farā'iḍīs*, and was presided over, by Mawlānā Abū'l-Barakāt 'Abd al-Raūf Dānāpūrī who was especially invited from United Province or Uttar Pradesh of India.

In the hand-bill, Bādshāh Miyān declares that in former times the *Farāiḍīs*, deemed it unlawful to hold the prayers of *Jum'ah* and *'Īd* in this country because of its being *Dār al-Ḥarb.* But since, by the grace of God, Pakistan has been established, these prayers have become lawful in this country. There is, however, a second condition, laid down by the *Ḥanafī* Jurists, which must be fulfilled for holding congregational prayers. This relates to the status of the place. For, in the opinion of the *Ḥanafī* jurists it is not lawfully permitted to hold the prayers of *Jum'ah* and ' *Īd* in the villages. These prayers can be held only in the towns. There is also difference of opinions with regard to the definition of "Township". Taking all these into consideration, we are inclined to hold the prayers of *Jum'ah* and ' *Īd* in the towns of Pakistan and in such other settlements which though are not generally regarded as towns yet resemble township on account of

1 The above hand-bill is a joint communique bearing the signature of Bādshāh Miyān and Mawlānā Danāpūrī, published in Bengali from Patuakhali in the district of Bakarganj but released from Bahadurpur. It bears the B.S. date, the 3rd Kartik, 1358 and A.D. the 17th October, 1947 ; *i.e.* 3 days after the conference, which was held on the 29th and 30th Ashvin, B.S. 1358. The hand-bill was seen by the present writer at Rekabi Bazār in 1958, and a true copy was made, which is now in the possession of the present writer.

the existence of roads and lanes, large settlements and market places in them.

In short, we deem it lawful to hold the prayers of *Jum'ah* and *'Īd* in the district and subdivisional towns of Pakistan as well as in such settlements and ports which resemble the subdivisional town and the population of which is not less than 4,000. In the latter places, these prayers are to be held by way of caution.

Mawlānā Dānāpūri endorsed the above opinion and opined that the riverport of Rekabi Bazar[1] was a small town or a big *qaṣbah*. Hence, the prayers of *Jum'ah* and *'Īd* ought to be held in it by way of caution.

1 It may be noted that when the present writer visted Rekabi Bazar in 1958, its population was estimated to be 3,000.

APPENDIX 'J'

Indigo planter in rural Bengal

In A. D. 1878, an interesting case was tried by Justice Pontifex at the Calcutta High Court involving the murder of a *ra'iyat*, Shaykh Munṣif by Mr. White, an indigo planter of Nadiya. Mr. White was accused of killing Shaykh Munṣif by physical assault and evidences were produced in such details and clarity that there was no room for doubt. It is alleged that Mr. White was released by the partiality of the Jury[1] and the Judge. The following excerpt is reproduced from the daily *Englishman*, published from Calcutta.

Monday, 8 July, 1878[2]

" The Judge—I cannot tell you, gentlemen of the jury, that there is no evidence ; but I cannot say what you think of it. I must say I think that if you believe the evidence, you can only find the prisoner guilty of murder. There are no links wanting in the evidence.

The Foreman—We don't wish to hear the defence as we have already made up our minds.

The Clerk of the Crown asked the jury if they had agreed upon their verdict.

The Foreman said they had ; they found the prisoner not guilty of all the charges against him.

The Judge—I quite agree with you, gentlemen of the Jury.

The evidence is utterly unreliable.

The accused was then discharged ".

1 The Jury consisted of 8 Europeans and one Hindu gentlemen.

2 *Englishman*, dated 8 July, 1878, p. 3, column 5 : the judgment in the case "Empress vs. White". It may be noted that the witnesses were examined for two days before the judgment was pronounced, and the full proceedings are available in the *Englisman* dated the 6th July (p. 3, column 2-4) and the 8th July (p. 3, column 3-5).

On the 8th July, the *Englishman* commented editorially as follows[1]:

" The trial ' Express vs. White ' is a striking example of how formidable a weapon the criminal procedure may become in the hands of the natives of the country, and of the dangerous position of a European in the Mufassal.

An English gentleman, Manager of a factory in the Nuddea District, is charged with murder of an atrocious character, is discharged by one Majistrate, and twelve months afterwards is committed to the High Court by another ".

"Subsequently, the late prosecutor of Mr. White urged in a letter published in the *Englishman*[2], 'not to prosecute the witnesses ' who gave evidence against Mr. White but to try to find out the man behind the scene who was the real conspirator ".

1 *Englishman*, 8 July, 1878, p. 2, column 3.
2 *Englishman*, 13 July, 1978, p. 2, column 1.

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CORRIGENDA

Page 14, foot note 64: *read* Bessaignet *instead* of Cessaignet.

Page 50, line 13: read A.D. 1852-1884 *instead of* A.D 1852-1883.

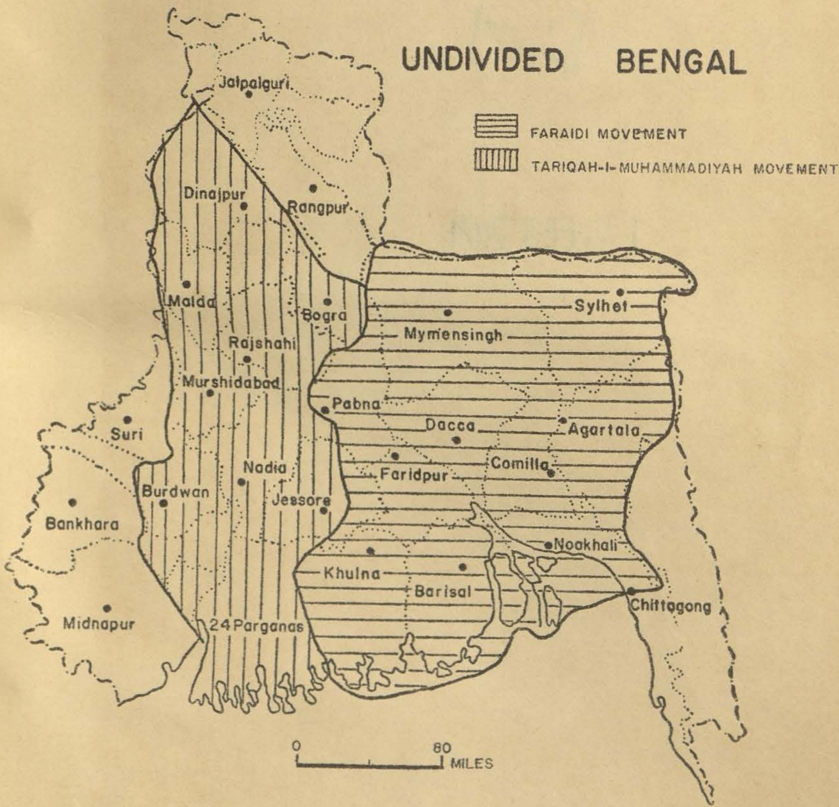
Page 52, line 1 : read Nayā Miyān *instead of* Nayā Miyn

Page 80, Para 4, line 2: *read* Chuttee *instead of* Chuttel.

Page 81, line 2 : *read* he-goat *instead of* he-gots.

Page 45, line 12 : *read* disorganised *instead of* disorgamised.

Page, 141, Heading *: read* Appendix 'G' *instead* 'C'.


UNDIVIDED BENGAL
FARAIDI MOVEMENT
TARIQAH-I-MUHAMMADIYAH MOVEMENT
Jalpaiguri
Dinajpur
Rangpur
Malda
Bogra
Rajshahi
Murshidabad
Suri
Burdwan
Bankhara
Midnapur
Nadia
Jessore
24 Parganas
Sylhet
Mymensingh
Pabna
Dacca
Agartala
Faridpur
Comilla
Noakhali
Khulna
Barisal
Chittagong
0
80
MILES